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THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT
OF
RELIGIOUS BELIEF

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

The Origin and Development of
Religious Belief

PART II

CHRISTIANITY. *Crown 8vo, 3s. 6d.*

Curious Myths of the Middle Ages

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THE
ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT
OF
RELIGIOUS BELIEF

BY
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AUTHOR OF "CURIOUS MYTHS OF THE MIDDLE AGES," ETC.

PART I
POLYTHEISM AND MONOTHEISM

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Dedicated
TO
MY FATHER.

PREFACE

THIS work is the result of the study and thought of many years. Dissatisfied with the evidences commonly alleged for Christianity, I looked to see if the religion of the Incarnation did not rest on other and sounder grounds its claim for the allegiance of humanity. And it seemed to me, that if God created man, and implanted in his soul certain spiritual instincts and tendencies, a revelation from God on which a religion may be built must meet and satisfy these instincts and tendencies.

Consequently, the first step to be taken in deciding whether a revelation be true or not is to examine what are the religious instincts and tendencies of mankind. And then to see whether Christianity does answer to these needs.

The period when historical evidence was accepted as establishing the claims of Christianity is over. An historical revelation is necessarily subject to historical criticism; and the authority and authenticity of the documents are open to question. The revelation of our own

nature is never antiquated, and is always open to be catechised. On this revelation, it seems to me, the Church of the Future must establish its claims.

These volumes were written nearly ten years ago, and there is much in them which I should have liked to recast and re-write. The human mind is in constant flux. No one is more conscious of the defects in the work than myself; but it has been represented to me that the book as it is will be useful to minds in the same stage of growth that mine was in ten years ago, and so I leave it almost untouched.

EAST MERSEA,
COLCHESTER, *Aug.* 24, 1877.

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POLYTHEISM AND MONOTHEISM

CHAPTER I

THE SEAT OF THE RELIGIOUS SENTIMENT

The doctrine of the Correlation of Force—The planes of existence—The individual spontaneous force lifts from one to the other—Mode of cellular growth—Functions of the spontaneous force—Differentiation of cellular action—Nervous apparatus—Reflex, consensual, and intelligent action—Nervous structure in man—The homologues in lower organisms—The functions of the cerebral ganglia—Mental action a resolution of force—Ideas are formed by force becoming latent—Instinct—The seat of the emotions—The seat of the intelligence—The importance of the feelings—The feelings are the social organ, the intellect is the individual organ—The co-ordination of intellect and feelings is the province of religion.

FORCE is that which produces or resists motion.¹

It is indestructible. When it has ceased to exhibit itself in one form, it has not ceased to *be*, but it has assumed expression in some other form.

A force cannot originate otherwise than by devolution from some pre-existing force or forces.

¹ Grove: *Correlation of Physical Forces*; London, 1842. Tyndall: *Heat considered as a Mode of Motion*; London, 1868. Mayer: *Die organische Bewegung in ihrer Zusammenhang m. d. Stoffwechsel*, 1845. Bray: *On Force and its Mental Correlates*; London, n.d. Cranbrook: *Doctrine of Correlation of Forces*; Edinburgh, 1867.

In physics, light, colour, heat, electricity, chemical affinity, attraction and repulsion, are modes of force.

Matter is the vehicle through which force acts, is propagated, and alters its direction. Motion is the mode of alteration of force, and the transfer of it in greater or less intensity from one point to another.

Light, heat, electricity, &c. are correlatives; and the degree, intensity, or quantity of the one taking the place of, or superinduced by another, always bears an exactly definite proportion to the degree, intensity, or quantity of that other whose place it takes, or by which it is superinduced.

The quantity, intensity, or degree of motion of one kind superinduced in a body by motion of another kind is always in exact relation to the quantity, intensity, or degree of that superinducing motion.

Thus, when water at 212° is converted into steam, the heat which it receives is no longer manifested as heat, but mechanical force is developed in its stead, and this in a definite ratio. The locomotive force of the railway engine is this mechanical force evolved from coal. When a station is approached a brake is applied, and smoke and sparks fly from the wheel pressed by it. The train is brought to rest by reversion of the propelling force into heat.

Count Rumford boiled water by hammering on iron; in wielding his hammer he expended muscular force. That muscular force he derived from the food he had assimilated, that food had drawn its force from earth and air and water, and into air and water it returned.

When chemical decomposition takes place, heat is generated; that is, the cohesive force which combined the molecules in a certain relation, being no longer needed to maintain that relation, is liberated, and takes flight as caloric.

The evolution of electricity produces vibrations, which

meeting the ear are registered as sounds, and meeting the eye are noted as light, and meeting the touch produce pain.

We shall see, presently, that vital and mental and nervous action are also modifications of force.

There are four phases of existence known to us, raised, as planes, one above the other.

The first and lowest is that of elementary existence.

The second is the plane of chemical compounds, or the mineral kingdom.

The third is the plane of vegetable existence.

The fourth is the plane of animal life.

It is the special function of force acting as chemical affinity to raise matter from plane 1 to 2; and all changes which take place on this plane are under the guidance and control of this force. It is obvious that to maintain combination some force must be superadded to the latent forces in the elements themselves. Thus, oxygen and hydrogen are placed in juxtaposition at an ordinary temperature, but they will not combine. A flame must be applied to the mechanical mixture—that is, the force discharged from the match in combustion must be applied—to unite the chemical elements. With this superadded force union is at once effected, and water is the result.

It is the special prerogative of vegetative force to lift matter from plane 2 to plane 3. All the changes taking place on this plane, the laws of which constitute vegetable physiology, are under the guidance and control of this force.

Here, again, to form organic cellular growth a force must be superadded to the chemical forces. Whence is this obtained? Without denying the possibility of spontaneous generation, in the lowest forms of vegetable life, it may be safely asserted that this co-ordinating, selecting, and con-

structive force is derived from the parent plant, and is contained in the germ.

Finally, the force of animal life, and that alone, enjoys the privilege of lifting matter still higher, into the plane of animal existence.

If then it be admitted that this is the relative position of the planes, and that it requires a greater and greater expenditure of force to maintain matter upon each successive plane, then it follows that any amount of matter returning to a lower plane by decomposition must set free or develop a force which may under favourable circumstances raise other matter from a lower to a higher condition.¹

Let us consider vegetable matter in decomposition. The act of decomposition liberates the vegetative force. In this matter low cellular organisms appear in great abundance. Now these must be either generated spontaneously or be developed from eggs deposited in the matter. It has been said that belief in spontaneous generation varies directly with our ignorance of the real physiology of the reproduction. Thus, the ancients believed that rats and mice sprang from the earth without parents, and till the time of Redi maggots were supposed to be immediate products of decomposition.

And the current of scientific progress has served to shew that every organism, of whatever kind, is the immediate product of previously-existing organisms. Not even infusorial plants and animals are now believed to be spontaneously generated. As a matter of fact no satisfactory evidence has been produced to show that the most rudimentary life can be developed out of matter from which living organisms have been eliminated, and which is kept isolated from them.

¹ Philosophical Magazine, 1860, p. 133.

The following interesting account of the development of some of these germs is given by a careful experimental naturalist, M. Pouchet. He steeped darnel in water for one hour, then filtered the water and set it aside. On the next day a number of monads appeared on the surface of the filtered fluid. These were nearly all dead on the following day, and their bodies formed a thin granular scum on the surface. On the third day there began to appear some "œufs spontanées," first as little greenish-yellow clots formed of some of the granules of the scum. The central granules were larger and more compact than the rest, and the outside ones more delicate and exhibiting looseness of cohesion, forming, as the mass gradually assumed a spheroidal form, a kind of *zona pellucida*. This was more distinct in other specimens, and then the vitellus was seen in gyration. On the fourth day almost all the eggs were perfectly formed, and on the fifth day perfect *Paramecia* appeared.

In the lowest infusoria, such as the *Bacteria*, all these changes cannot be followed; but they are observed to appear in clots in a way quite inconsistent with the notion that they had been produced from eggs dropping accidentally from the surrounding air. The surface of a fluid in fermentation is seen to be covered with a delicate mucous film. In this film there appear all at once a number of pale motionless lines, nearly parallel to one another, and of the form and size of bacteria, and in a few hours they have developed into living and active infusoria.¹ That eggs do float in the air has, however, been ascertained experimentally, by drawing a column of air through gun-cotton, and then dissolving the gun-cotton, when a number of small,

¹ Pouchet : *Nouvelles Expériences sur la Génération Spontanée*, pp. 111-16 ; Paris, 1864.

round, or oval bodies, quite indistinguishable from the spores of minute plants and the ova of infusoria, were found.¹

The question, therefore, remains as yet undecided, whence these early forms of life arise; but for their development it has been ascertained that three requisites must unite,—organic matter, water, and air.

The cell is not the first living organism, however, for the Protozoa exhibit a still more rudimentary condition, consisting of homogeneous jelly-like substance; and the chief modification this undergoes consists in the consolidation of certain parts of it by the deposit of horny, calcareous or silicious matter. This may take place on the outer surface only, so as to form shells, or in the construction of an internal network, as in the sponge.

The Amœba is an example of an organization at its lowest term, without the distinct differentiation into containing and contained parts necessary to constitute a cell. “However inert this creature may seem when first glanced at, its possession of vital activity is soon made apparent by the movements which it executes and the changes of form it undergoes; these being, in fact, parts of one and the same set of actions. For the shapeless mass puts forth one or more finger-like prolongations, which are simply extensions of its gelatinous substance in those particular directions; and a continuation of the same action, just distending the prolongation, and then, as it were, carrying the whole body into it, causes the entire mass to change its place. When, in the course of its progress, it meets with a particle appropriate to its nutriment, its gelatinous body spreads itself over this, so as to envelope it completely; and the substance, sometimes animal, sometimes vegetable, thus taken

¹ Pasteur : *Mémoires sur les Corpuscules organisés* ; Paris, 1861.

into this extemporized stomach, undergoes a sort of digestion therein, the nutrient material passing into the substance of the sarcode, and any indigestible portion making its way to the surface, from some part of which it is, as it were, finally squeezed out."¹

Inherent in the primordial cell of every organism, whether it be vegetable or animal, and in all the tissues that are developed out of it, is a governing principle or force which, acting independently of the consciousness of the organism, and whether the latter be endowed with consciousness or not, builds matter into machines of singular complexity for a fixed, manifest, and apparently predetermined object—the preservation and perfection of the individual, and the continuance of the species.

This spontaneous force, for which it is difficult to select a name, operates through and upon matter in three modes:—

1. It moulds and compounds matter into living organisms.

2. It moves and regulates the motions of these organisms.

3. It acts—in those animals endowed with consciousness—through the vesicular neurine contained in the cranium, which it has already accumulated, and we have the phenomenon of thought.

In simple cellular animalcules this force is central. It has gathered the material of which the cell is composed from various parts. It organizes the particles, and marshals them as a general his host.

When a number of cells, each possessing the same properties, are combined into one mass, we have a living

¹ Carpenter : *Animal Physiology*, s. 129 ; London, 1867.

being without individuality: such is the yeast plant, and the hydra. They are rather societies of unicellular organisms than compound individuals.

But in higher types of plants, the functions of the cells are diversified. Some secrete colouring matter; others starch, gum, sugar, oil; and another the material for reproduction. In the higher animals, and in some vegetable organisms, the functions are more specialized, and are carried on by special apparatuses constructed for the purpose. Food is assimilated by one class, is carried thus assimilated to the molecular tissues by another; the results of waste and repair are carried off by machinery adapted to the purpose; the germ-cells and sperm-cells are developed also in special tissues—the reproductive organs. There are also apparatuses for the prehension of food, for the supply of the oxidizing material, &c.

All these require to be combined in action for the attainment of the objects of the organism as a unity, and we have therefore a special apparatus formed for this end, in which that unconscious force, previously, and indeed still, present alike in all the cells, is now specially localized: this apparatus is the nervous system.

In the invertebrate sub-kingdom is seen the simplest form of nervous system, which consists of distinct ganglia with commissural cords and nerves, administering to the functions of automatic life.

A nerve consists of two portions, one vascular, the other fibrous. The function of the vascular portion is to convey impressions inwards, that of the fibrous portion is to reflect the impressed force outward, resolving it into muscular action.

The simplest mode of action is when an impression made on the afferent nerve thrills to the ganglionic centre in

which the nerve terminates, when it alters its direction, and is shot down the motor nerve which sets the muscles in operation, and at once discharges the force received.

This action is simply *reflex*.

Thus a force A acting on the afferent nerve becomes B, which is precisely equivalent in amount to the force A. The nervous system of the lower organisms is simply one of reflex action.

If the ganglion be one through which consciousness is necessarily affected, sensation becomes a necessary link in the circle, and the action is then called *consensual*.

Sensation is the lowest form of mental action. The next stage is that called *ideo-motor* action, in which the sensation is resolved into an idea, and the idea sets the muscles in operation, if the will approves, and expends the force received, or else stores it up for future expenditure.

In the lowest organisms that have nervous apparatuses each ganglion has the same function as any other. In the Radiata the nervous system consists of a ring around the mouth, with ganglia at the base of each ray. Each of these ganglia is precisely similar in character to all the others.

In the Mollusca, which inhabit univalve shells, there is no such repetition of parts, but there is a single ganglion, or, if the creature have a foot, there is added a special pedal ganglion, united by a commissure to the main ganglion.

In the Conchifera, inhabiting bivalve shells, there are at least two ganglia, generally three or four. Of these one is posterior to the others, and is of large size. It has reference to the hinge of the valves. It is the branchial ganglion, the seat of muscular action, whilst the smaller ganglia in the forepart are the seats of sensation. Through these the animal receives impressions, which it communicates to

the posterior knot, which converts them into muscular action.

In the *Articulata*, the apparatus of motion is greatly developed, and the nervous system assumes an axidal position, and consists of a line of small ganglia, some thirteen at most, of which all but the two foremost, which are in the same plane, are repetitions one of another. The exceptions are the cephalic ganglia. This arrangement is observable in the larva, but in the perfected insect a redistribution of ganglia takes place, several disappear, the two at the posterior extremity coalesce, the cephalic ganglia increase in size, and the thoracic ganglia, from which the legs and wings are supplied, are concentrated and enlarged.

In the *Vertebrata* the ganglia are no longer distributed like tubers with commissural filaments, but are united into one continuous column, expanding at the head into a large knot of ganglia; the whole enclosed in strong bony armour.

In the *Vertebrata* the cerebral ganglia consist of—

1. The sensory ganglia, including those of sight and smell.
2. The cerebrie hemispheres.
3. The cerebellum.

The spinal cord in the lower vertebrate species is thick, and branches at its junction with the brain. The optic and olfactory ganglia predominate, the cerebellum is small, and the cerebrum smaller yet.

In higher types, where there is great complication of muscular action, the cerebellum assumes importance.

In man, the cerebrum is far larger than any of the other portions, its hemispheres overlap all the other parts, and are marked out with convolutions.

In reptiles, birds, and mammals the fork which appears in fish at the junction of the spinal cord and brain is filled

up; the spinal cord becomes gradually less thick and important as the type rises, and the preponderating nervous tract is located in the skull.¹

The vascular afferent matter of the nervous system is grey, the fibrous efferent matter is white. Throughout the whole length of the spine the grey lies within the white. Towards the loins the amount of grey is greater than at the small of the back; this is the representative of the posterior ganglion in the lower organisms. The spinal cord receives afferent fibres from every portion of the body and gives origin to efferent fibres, which unite with the former at a short distance from the spine; thus each nerve has two roots, and has at once a centripetal and a centrifugal action. The spine being a nucleus of nervous matter, a continuous ganglion, it can resolve force without transmitting it to the brain, but this action is simply reflex.

Towards the junction of the spine and brain is the medulla oblongata, a prolongation and expansion of spinal matter. This is the ganglionic centre of the respiratory and deglutitive action. This is of a strictly reflex character also, all such action being due to an impression exerted upon the periphery of the system, which being reported to the centre returns as a motor impulse.

Overhanging the fourth ventricle of the brain is a great laminated mass, the cerebellum; on each side, this organ sends down layers of transverse fibres, which sweep across the brain and meet in the middle line of its base, forming a kind of bridge, called the Pons Varolii.

The longitudinal nerve-fibres of the medulla oblongata pass forward, and emerge in front of this bridge as two

¹ This is summarized from Dr. Carpenter's "*Principles of General and Comparative Physiology*," and Valentin's "*Text Book of Physiology*," London, 1853.

broad diverging bundles, called *crura cerebri*. Above these lies a mass of nervous matter, raised into four hemispherical elevations, called *corpora quadrigemina*.

The *crura* then pass into a second large mass of nervous matter, called *thalami optici*, from which the fibres pass on into a body of grey and white matter, called *corpus striatum*. Adjoining these are the olfactory ganglia. The auditory ganglia are lodged in the substance of the medulla oblongata on either side of the fourth ventricle, and the gustatory ganglion is probably another node similarly imbedded in the medulla oblongata.

The sensory ganglia form the base of the cerebral hemispheres. In the medulla oblongata the grey vesicular substance occupies the same position within the white as it does in the spinal cord, but in the cerebral hemispheres and in the cerebellum the grey matter is external.

From the *thalami optici* and *corpora striata*, fibres radiate to the surface of the cerebrum.

The cerebellum has no direct communication with the cerebrum, but possesses independent connexions with the upper part of the spinal cord; it has its white matter so disposed within the grey as to exhibit a very peculiar and beautiful tree-like appearance, termed the *arbor vitæ*.

Such is the structure of the human brain. We will next consider what each portion is homologous to in the lower organisms.

In the lowest forms of animal life which are provided with a nervous system, all nervous action is reflex. In man, the spine (which is a continued chain of ganglia fused into one), the visceral ganglia, and the medulla oblongata are the homologues of these reflex motor nervous structures.

To the cephalic ganglia of those insects which have

perception of smell and sound, and which have visual organs, answer the sensory ganglia in man. In myriads of animals, indeed in the whole of the invertebrate sub-kingdom, no cerebrum exists; and, even in the lower Vertebrata, the olfactory, optic, and auditory ganglia have no direct connexion with it, so that the totality of their life is made up of sensational consciousness, which is formularized by sensori-motor action.

In those animals which exhibit great variety of motion, the cerebellum assumes prominence. Reptiles are the most inert of vertebrate animals, and in them the cerebellum is small. The active predaceous fishes have it largely developed. The vermiform fishes, whose progression is accomplished by flexion of the body, have a cerebellum so small as to be scarcely discoverable. On turning to the class of birds, we observe that the active falcons and swift-swinged swallows have a cerebellum much larger in proportion than that of the gallinaceous birds, whose powers of flight are small, or than that of the struthious tribe, in which they are altogether absent. Among mammals, its size bears a fixed proportion to the number and variety of muscular actions requiring combined movements of which they are respectively capable.

In the adult brain of man, in whom exists a necessity for co-ordination of an immense variety of voluntary and locomotive actions, no part of the encephalon has such extensive connexions with the cerebro-spinal axis, for it is in union with each segment of the great nervous centres, upon which the sensations and movements of the body depend.

The cerebrum in like manner exhibits a steady increase in size as we ascend the vertebrate scale, till it culminates in man. In the bat, the mole, and the rat, as in birds, the

cerebral hemispheres are perfectly plain and smooth, though divided by the Sylvian fissure; in the rabbit, the beaver, and porcupine this fissure is strongly marked, but there are only a few depressions indicating the future sulci on the surface of the hemispheres. In the fox, the wolf, and the dog the simplest form of the true convolutions are first met with, the fundamental convolutions of Leuret. In the fox, as a typical example, they are six in number. In the human brain, there are three external fundamental convolutions, which are tortuous; and between the anterior and posterior portions of these three external convolutions are interposed, on the upper surface of the hemispheres, two sets of transverse convolutions, divided by a distinct sulcus. In each of the hemispheres there are four orders of convolutions. In the first there is but one, surrounding the hemispheres like a riband. Of the second order, the marginal convolutions, there are two. The internal convolutions form those of the third order. Those of the fourth, the largest, deepest, and least symmetrical of all, are especially characteristic of the human brain.

We will proceed next to consider the functions of the different portions of the brain.

The spinal cord, as has been already observed, is a distinct and independent centre of action, consisting of a series of segmental ganglia and nerves, structurally homologous, and functionally analogous to the jointed ganglionic cord of the *Articulata*. The excito-motory and reflex actions of which it is the seat are evidently subservient to the conservation of the organism.

The functions of the medulla oblongata have been described. We come now to the corpora striata, which are in close connexion with the cerebral hemispheres. Im-

planted upon the motor tracts of the *crura cerebri* and *medulla oblongata*, in them the motor fibres terminate, and they thus, with the vesicular matter of the *locus niger* and the anterior segmental ganglia of the spinal cord, constitute the motor axis of the cerebro-spinal system, and are the source of all the movements of the body, whether reflex, consensual, emotional, or voluntary. They are not, however, the seat of volition, but the encephalic motor centres through which the mandates of the will or feelings are propagated, the connecting links of thought and action. Their commissural connexions with the cerebrie hemispheres are so intimate and numerous, that they are evidently placed in subserviency at every point to the volitional power of the cerebrum.

But the *corpora striata* are not solely the motor centres of volition. From their close commissural relations with the *thalami optici*, they are also and equally the centres and channels of respondent sensori-motor actions, and of consensual, instinctive, and emotional movements.

The *thalami optici* form a nucleus around which the *corpora striata* bend. These are the essential ganglia of the sensory tracts, as the *corpora striata* are of the motor. Implanted upon the sensory tracts of the *crura cerebri* and *medulla oblongata*, in them the afferent fibres end. They are the great centres of sensorial feeling, receiving impressions from the sentient extremities of all the different nerves distributed over the whole surface of the body and resolving them into sensation.

They have, however, another office; they are the seat of the inner sensibilities. Lying within the band of the *corpora striata*, the *thalami*, like those bodies, are in most intimate and extensive relationship with the cerebrum, through the instrumentality of innumerable fan-like com-

missural fibres, the connecting links of thought with feeling and of ideation with emotion. "It may be inferred," writes Dr. Todd, "from their connexions with nerves chiefly of a sensitive kind, that the olivary columns and the optic thalami, which are continuous with them, are chiefly concerned in the reception of sensitive impressions, which may principally have reference merely to informing the mind (so to speak), or partly to the excitation of motion, as in deglutition, respiration, &c. The posterior horns of the grey matter of the cord, either by direct continuity with the olivary columns, or their union with them through commissural fibres, become part and parcel of a great centre of sensation, whether for mental or physical actions; and this leads us to view the thalami optici as the principal foci of sensibility, in intimate connexion with the convoluted surface of the brain, through its extensive fan-like radiations, and without which the mind could not perceive the physical change resulting from a sensitive impression. Again, the pyramidal bodies evidently connect the grey matter of the cord with the corpora striata; and not only these, but also the intervening masses of vesicular matter, such as the locus niger, and the vesicular matter of the pons and of the olivary columns; and, supposing the corpora striata to be the centres of volition in connexion with the convoluted surface of the brain by their numerous radiations, all these several parts are linked together for the common purposes of volition, and constitute a great centre of voluntary actions, amenable to the influence of the will at every point."¹

The corpora quadrigemina are manifestly the seat of those objective emotional feelings which are aroused through the agency of sight. In the brain of the fish, these

¹ Todd and Bowman : *Physiological Anatomy*, &c. p. 348.

bodies are united with the optic thalami into one mass, forming the optic lobes ; and this exhibits the closeness of the union of these two ganglionic masses, if it does not establish an identity of function.

The cerebellum is the seat of the muscular sense. Comparative anatomy, pathological research, and experimental inquiry alike establish the position that the office of this organ is the co-ordination of voluntary and locomotive action. The direct structural connexion subsisting between these co-ordinating organs and the corpora quadrigemina indicate the importance of the guiding influence of the visual sense in co-ordinating movements, and the restiform bodies act as channels for the transmission upwards to the corpora dentata, of impressions appertaining to the muscular sense.

The cerebrum is the seat of perceptive consciousness, intellectual action, and volitional power ; in a word, of the understanding and will, if we may use these abstract terms to describe the resolution of impressions into ideas, and the conversion of ideas into impulses.¹

From the above outline of nervous anatomy it will be possible to group the different classes of vital and mental operation carried on among animals about nervous ganglionic centres.

The classes of operations are three :—I. Reflex action, which is executed only in response to impressions made upon the nerves proceeding to a ganglionic centre. II. Sensational action, which is never performed without consciousness on the part of the animal, though the animal in executing it is not necessarily guided by any perception of the

¹ Dunn : *Physiological Psychology* ; London, 1855. Also his valuable papers in the "*Journal of Psychological Science*," to which I am greatly indebted.

object to be attained, or of the means by which it is to be accomplished, but acts impulsively, without or even against its will. III. Intelligent action, in which the will and the reason are the immediate agents.

The arrangement and connexions of the parts executing these three modes of action is concisely expressed by Dr. Carpenter, in a tabular view, which I take the liberty of extracting from his work on "Human Physiology," and slightly modifying.

CEREBRAL GANGLIA,		
The centres of the operations of <i>Intelligence and Will.</i>		
Nerves of Special Sensation. {	SENSORY GANGLIA, The centres of feelings and acts which are <i>Consensual, Instinctive, and Emotional.</i>	{ Nerves of Special Sensation.
CEREBELLUM.		
For harmonization of general <i>Muscular Action.</i>		
Nerves of Respiration, Deglutition, &c. {	MEDULLA OBLONGATA. The centre of <i>Reflex Action</i> in Respiration, Deglutition, &c.	{ Nerves of Respiration, Deglutition, &c.
Trunks of Spinal Nerves connected with extremi- ties. {	THE SPINAL CORD, Consisting of a chain of Ganglia for <i>Reflex Ac- tions</i> of the Trunk and extremities. }	{ Trunks of Spinal Nerves connected with extremi- ties, &c.

Man, in infancy, exhibits an incessant energy of animal life, and play of instinct. Physical organization is then supreme, and the medulla oblongata and cerebellum are the organs of the brain—the lowest in character—most in requisition.

In youth, obedience to instinct is replaced by sensation

and desire ; the exuberance of organization is restrained by the development of the higher mental organs ; sensation then holds sway, and the vital force is exerted in disintegration, and reconstruction, and expansion of the sensory ganglia.

In matured manhood, instincts, sensations, and desires are rendered subservient to reason ; then the cerebriic hemispheres are chiefly called into play.

Man has, therefore, three directions in which he can develop—animalism, sentiment, and reason.

That spontaneous principle which underlies all organic life is the active agent in producing reflex, consensual, instinctive, and intelligent action. This vital energy assimilates the force bound up in all organized matter, and which holds it together, decomposes, and then liberates it by action, by emotion, by thought, or will. Thus, violent muscular action produces an appetite ; intense emotion is the cause of great prostration ; intense mental application, or concentration of the will, makes a man hungry. The reason is, that the vital principle demands fuel in the shape of food, to supply waste of matter, which always accompanies action, and also having discharged an excess of stored-up force, it demands a supply to enable it to preserve equilibrium.

A very curious instance of the modification of force in producing a radical change in constitution is presented by the bees when they have lost a queen. The workers are sexless—or rather, they are females with the reproductive organ undeveloped. When a colony of bees is without a queen, one of the worker grubs is taken and fed on stimulating food, reserved for exclusive use by the queen. This strong diet soon develops the sexual organ of the bee, alters the shape of her tongue, jaws, and sting, deprives her of the

power of producing wax, and obliterates the hollows in the thighs adapted for the transport of pollen.

The vital principle having accumulated force, can expend it either in animalism, sentiment, or reason. Every animal, except man, expends it on securing its own growth and conservation, and on transmission of vitality to another generation. Such reason as it has, is used to find its food, build its home, and seek out one of another sex. The caterpillar eats its own weight in a day, because it is accumulating the force which will develop it into a butterfly; but when in its imago condition, it scarcely eats, as it has reached the limit of its development. Its butterfly life is the expenditure of what was collected so diligently in its larva state.

Man can at his choice use up that force which he assimilates by his food in perfecting his vegetative life, or in the elaboration of brain matter. The country clown lives a life very little above that of the brute; he consumes a prodigious amount of force and material, and this he converts into muscle, flesh, blood, and sperm. He lives only to sustain his life and propagate his species.

Education tends to precipitate the force acquired upon the cerebral hemispheres; it sends a stream of blood over the whole surface, which oxidizes the grey vascular matter, and this oxidation is a manifestation of the production of thought. In sleep, nature builds up what has been pulled down during the day, adds cells, deepens the convolutions of the brain, and thus exposes more surface to oxidation. The waste and wear is carried off in the urine, as alkaline phosphates. The amount of earthy phosphates present in the urine is found to bear a constant relation to that which is contained in the food, but the amount of alkaline phosphates varies with different conditions of mental action; and

it is found that when severe intellectual exertion has impaired the nutrition of the brain, any premature attempt to renew the activity of its exercise causes the reappearance of an excessive phosphatic discharge.

But all the force absorbed is not at once expended in action. Mental exertion has produced ideas which remain in the mind, and the maintenance of these ideas consumes a large portion of the force received, which thus becomes latent.

It is not only through food that force passes to the brain; each sense is a force-conductor, as each muscle is a force-liberator. Sights, sounds, scents are modes of motion; nay, even qualities are so much more or so much less force. Thus ice takes up from the surrounding atmosphere a certain amount of heat, which is a form of force: this becomes latent in it when it assumes the state of water. And water absorbs more force to become steam. Thus solidity, liquefaction, vaporization are modes of force. It is evident also that dimension is a modification of force; for dimension is due to the greater or less degree of cohesion in the mass, and this again is due to the amount of heat latent in it. Light is a modification of force. According to the theory now universally received, it consists of a vibratory motion of the particles of a luminous body propagated in waves, which flow in at the pupil of the eye, and, breaking upon the retina at the back, transmit their motion along the optic nerve to the brain, where they announce themselves as consciousness of light, and the perception retained becomes an idea. Sound is the undulation of the air. The force applied by the finger to a harp-string flings the air into agitation, and the ripples sweep in at the ear, vibrate on the tympanum, and are thrilled to the auditory ganglion, where the perception remains as a musical idea.

“The spectrum is to the eye,” says Professor Tyndall, “what the gamut is to the ear; its different colours represent notes of different pitch. The vibrations which produce impressions of red are slower, and the ethereal waves which they generate are longer, than those which produce the impression of violet; while the other colours are excited by waves of some intermediate length. The length of the waves, both of sound and light, and the number of shocks which they respectively impart, both to the ear and the eye, have been strictly determined. Let us here go through a simple calculation. Light travels through space at a velocity of 192,000 miles a second. Reducing this to inches, we find the number to be 12,165,120,000. Now, it is found that 39,000 waves of red light, placed end to end, would make up an inch; multiplying the number of inches in 192,000 miles by 39,000, we obtain the number of waves of red light in 192,000 miles: this number is 474,439,680,000,000. All these waves enter the eye in a single second. To produce the impression of red in the brain, the retina must be hit at this almost incredible rate. To produce the impression of violet, a still greater number of impulses is necessary; it would take 57,500 waves of violet to fill an inch, and the number of shocks required to produce the impression of this colour amounts to six hundred and ninety-nine millions of millions per second. The other colours of the spectrum rise gradually in pitch from red to violet. But beyond the violet we have rays of too high a pitch to be visible, and beyond the red we have rays of too low a pitch to be visible.”¹

I have said that nervous action is a transmission of force. This statement is not merely hypothetical. Nervous

¹ Tyndall : *Heat as a Mode of Motion*, p. 255.

force has been ascertained by experiment to bear a very striking resemblance to electricity, though its difference is also evident. A feeble galvanic current transmitted along the motor nerve of an animal recently killed will produce muscular contraction; whilst, on the other hand, a similar current transmitted along an afferent nerve will excite reflex movement through its ganglionic centre. "However strongly we may be convinced of the absence of *identity* between nervous and electric forces, it is impossible to be otherwise than impressed with the extraordinary analogy which exists between them. To use Professor Grove's term, they are mutually correlated, and that in the closest degree."¹ Heat, in like manner, if applied to a motor nerve in its course, calls forth muscular contractions, and if applied to a sensory nerve it will occasion sensations, both common and special, precisely after the manner of electricity.

The same may be said of chemical affinity; for if certain reagents be applied to nerve-trunks they may be made to call into action their various endowments, whether these be motory or sensory; whilst, on the other hand, there is ample evidence that the chemical properties of secretions may be greatly changed under the direct influence of nervous force.²

In the brute, every impression through a sense produces a corresponding muscular discharge. We can thus complete the circle. But with man—and the brute which has cerebral hemispheres, and uses them in accumulating ideas—the circle is as yet incomplete. We can trace, say, the force of the impact on the retina of scarlet waves to the

¹ Dr. Carpenter on Mattrucci's Lectures, in *Medico-Chirurgical Review*, 1848.

² *Philosophical Transactions*, vol. cxl. (1850), p. 745.

brain, but we see no corresponding liberation of this force. It is therefore taken up, and becomes latent, just as the solar force has become latent in the beds of coal, and is only liberated when the coal is burnt. The force from the stroke of the waves of scarlet light is taken up by the brain, and there becomes a conception. In the formation of the notion the force becomes passive.

Where there is no perception, there is no notion to answer to it. The man blind from his birth can form no conception of scarlet; for the optic ganglia have not been charged with the force which forms the notion of scarlet, and *ex nihilo nihil fit* applies to notions as well as to material objects.

Thus we can form no notions of that which we have never seen, heard, smelt, or tasted.

Idealization is the accumulation of notions—that is, of fossil percepts. The notions received and the ideas formed out of them remain in the brain. Say an ideal of beauty is formed: the sculptor elaborates it in marble, and runs the pent-up force out of the storehouse where it had lain.

In the beast whose action is sensori-motrix, this action is instinctive; it can hardly be called yet reasoning; the creature receives an impression that awakes an emotion, which produces action. In man, the sensation transmitted to the cerebrum creates a corresponding concept. This, combined with more or less other concepts, produces an idea. Perception is the portal to intellectual action; for while in sensation the conscious mind feels intuitively the physical impulse of the outward object as it affects the consciousness through the sensorium, in idealization the nervous impression is carried a stage farther, and, by virtue of the harmony which exists between the percipient mind and the external world, the sensory impression is intuitively translated into

the form of intelligence, and becomes an intellectual phenomenon. If we reflect on the processes that go on in our own minds, we easily distinguish between a sensation and an idea, and are able to mark the sequential origin of the latter. We often hear words, but they convey no idea to our minds for some minutes, when all at once their significance breaks upon us. The correlated physiological phenomena may be thus stated: The auditory ganglia receive the sentient impression at once; its passage onward is delayed; presently, however, the obstruction is removed, the sensation flows into the hemispheric ganglia, oxidation takes place, and the ideas are formed corresponding to the words received by the ear.¹

A schoolmaster complains that his boys will not pay attention to their lessons. The vital force of the children is at the time engaged upon the digestion of raw apples, robbed from the master's garden. If a portion of the skull of one of these urchins were removed, the brain would be found to be almost colourless, and by no means filling the cavity of the cranium. Let, however, this boy suddenly resolve to apply his mind to the task: instantly a delicate rosy flush will appear over the surface of the cerebrum; it will swell and protrude from the opening. The vital energy has jerked the blood from the coats of the stomach into the veins of the head.

The sensory ganglionic tract is, as has been said, the seat of the emotions. Man has the power, shared with him by some of the higher Vertebrata, but by them in a vastly inferior degree, of resolving an idea into an emotion—that is, of fixing his affections on some conception of the cerebrum. He forms an idea not always out of immediately

¹ Noble : *Correlation of Psychology and Physiology*, p. 27 ; and Dunn : *Physiological Psychology*.

received impressions, and this idea he transmits to the thalami optici, where it becomes an object of emotion; the corpora striata and the cerebellum share in the agitation, and the muscular action expends the force. Thus, I see an object: the perception becomes one of danger; my emotion of fear is aroused, and contraction of the heart and cessation of breathing ensue. Or I call up ideally some image of beauty: the emotion of love is excited, muscular action is again set up, and the heart beats rapidly and the breath comes short and quick.

The importance of the cerebral hemispheres to man cannot be questioned. As the seat of intelligence, they place man above the brute, the European above the red-skin, and the red-skin above the negro. In the European the cerebrum is far larger than in the red-skin and negro; and this is due, possibly, to a long training, which has developed cerebral cells at the expense of cerebellic cells. The red-skin depends for subsistence on his agility, and therefore his vital energy labours to perfect the cerebellum, in which co-ordination of muscular action takes place. But it is not so with the European; he depends on the activity of his intelligence, and therefore the energizing principle enlarges the amount of cerebrum, and deepens its convolutions. We all know by experience that the exercise of muscle tends to strengthen it; that is, the direction of the attention of our vital energy is devoted to the construction of muscular fibre. We know that education sharpens the wits; that is, the same vital energy is turned to the elaboration of brain matter. We know also by experience that in proportion as we use up acquired force in muscular exertion intellectual action fails, and in proportion as mental work is executed does muscular power languish.

We will not consider the importance of intellect, which

is admitted by all, but the importance of emotion, or feelings, which some are disposed to underrate.

The feelings are the great incentives to intellectual activity. They register pleasure and pain. Certain sights and sounds afford them gratification, and they urge the intellect to seek out modes of reproducing those impressions. Other sights and sounds distress them, and they excite the intellect to devise methods of avoiding them. The feelings seem to be tuned in a definite key, and certain undulations of sound or of light set them in rhythmical harmonious vibration, whilst others throw them into discordant agitation.

Without the feeling of pleasure derived from study there would be no intellectual advance among mankind; without that of domestic love there would be no association; without the feeling of delight produced by harmonies of shape, colour, and sound, there would be no art.

The emotions are indeed the spring of intellectual activity, and their development is as essential to man's well-being and pre-eminence as is that of his reasoning powers. And, as the reasoning powers can be directed towards any one point, or on any one subject, so can the affections take one direction to the exclusion of other directions. The emotions and thoughts are so closely connected that they usually work together; but occasionally they are in antagonism, as when the desire tends towards what the reason knows to be unadvisable. "The passions," said Sydney Smith, "are, in morals, what motion is in physics: they create, preserve, and animate; and without them, all would be silence and death. Avarice guides men across the deserts of the ocean; pride covers the earth with trophies, mausoleums, and pyramids; love turns men from their savage rudeness; ambition shakes the very foundation of kingdoms. By the love of glory, weak nations swell

into magnitude and strength. Whatever there is of terrible, whatever there is of beautiful in human events, all that shakes the soul to and fro, and is remembered while thought and flesh cling together,—all these have their origin in the passions. As it is only in storms, and when their coming waters are driven up into the air, that we catch a glimpse of the depths of ocean; so it is only in the season of perturbation that we have a glimpse of the real internal nature of man. It is then only that the might of these eruptions, shaking his frame, dissipate all the feeble coverings of opinion, and rend in pieces that cobweb veil with which fashion hides the feelings of the heart. It is then only that Nature speaks her genuine feelings; and as at the last night of Troy, when Venus illumined the darkness, and Æneas saw the gods themselves at work, so may we, when the blaze of passion is flung upon man's nature, mark in him the signs of a celestial origin, and tremble at the invisible agent of God."

That the feelings exert a powerful influence over the physical condition is well known. Fear produces cardiac hypertrophy; shame projects the blood over the surface of the body. Intense emotion will often disorganize the cerebral tissue, and disease of the brain may derange or instantly annihilate the manifestation of mind.

Emotion affects the secretions. Fear will frequently induce diuresis and diarrhoea; anger and jealousy will soon clog the bile ducts and originate jaundice. The sexual stimulus is constantly influenced by these emotions, which interfere with or neutralize instinctive passion. In Lord Anson's voyage, despondency and hope were proved to be exciting cause and remedy in the most malignant attacks of scorbutus.

On the other hand, the emotions, and through them the

mind, are disturbed by morbid conditions of the bodily functions. Robespierre, over whose cruelty we shudder, was found after death to have extensive visceral disease. Judge Jeffreys—of whom Macaulay says that as he proceeded in his bloody work, “his spirits rose higher and higher; he laughed, shouted, joked, and swore in such a way that many thought him drunk from morning to night”—was tortured by a cruel internal malady. An English traveller calling on Voltaire, at Ferney, found him desponding, grumbling, and dissatisfied with mankind. The Frenchman’s *ennui* and the Englishman’s spleen exalting the mutual discontent of both parties, they ended by deciding that existence was intolerable, and they agreed to commit suicide together on the following morning. The Englishman, punctual to his engagement, arrived at the appointed spot; but the volatile Frenchman was no longer in the same miserable, suicidal mood. “Monsieur,” he said, “mon lavement a très bien opéré ce matin, et cela a changé toutes ces idées là.”¹

The feelings are the subjective or feminine portion of the mind, and the intellect is the objective and masculine portion. The development of intellect exclusively, tends to narrow the scope of the feelings and exhaust them of power. The development of feeling or sentiment at the expense of reason makes a man impulsive, amiable, and foolish.

The office of the feelings is to excite the intellect, that of the intellect is to modulate the feelings; the office of neither is to destroy the other.

The intellect is that which individualizes man: the sentiment is that which socializes him. Intellectually, he

¹ Dr. Forbes Winslow: Lettsomian Lectures; I. The Psychological Vocation of the Physician.

could live alone in vacuum; but the sentiment places him *en rapport* with the material world. Mentally he is one, sentimentally he is one among many. Individuality tends constantly to break the social chain. It detaches man from man as effectually as it does from the brute. This exhibits itself in the tendency to withdraw into themselves, and out of the world, apparent in men of strong mental power unbalanced by sociality. On the other hand, the tendency of exaggeration of sociality is towards the obliteration of individuality and the formularization of thought. Intellect without sentiment would isolate man. His independence and individuality would become more and more pronounced, and therewith his incompatibility to live as a member of a community.

The instinct of self-conservation would be the only motive actuating an intelligent being without sentiment. In the lowest organisms this instinct is the only one they know, and their generative process is by gemmation, which is purely selfish. In higher organisms sexual love and maternal love take the creature out of itself, but only in a measure; for distress through deprivation of the means of relieving itself of certain secretions is the real motive. Still, in these instances the animal does act for another, and in so acting develops a power and skill of which the agamogenetic animals exhibit no trace. This skill and power appear in their building of habitations suitable for the protection of their young. In man the social instinct is only one of a series of emotional cravings, all of which tend to withdraw him from himself, and attach him to human beings, or to objects of nature; and which are the means of developing his mental powers in the arts and sciences.

"In every complex existence," says Comte, "the general

harmony can only result from a proper subordination of all spontaneous impulses to a single preponderant motor. Now this dominating *penchant* is either egoistic or altruistic. Not only does this latter surpass the former, as the only one compatible with the social state, but besides, it constitutes, even in the individual, a unity more complete, more easy, and more durable. The inferior instincts direct the conduct according to motives purely internal, whose multiplicity and variation allow him no steadiness of movement, nor indeed any habitual character, except during the impulses produced by the periodic exigencies of certain appetites. The being must subordinate itself to an exterior existence in order that it may find its proper stability. Moreover, this condition can only be realized effectively under the influence of desires disposing each to live chiefly for others. Every individual, man or beast, which, loving nothing outside of itself, lives solely for itself, finds itself to be by that alone habitually condemned to a miserable alternative of ignoble torpor and unregulated agitation. Unquestionably, the main object of every living being ought to be the perfecting of this universal consensus in which resides the essential attribute of vitality. This is why even personal happiness and merit depend everywhere on a just ascendancy of the sympathetic instincts. Our race is the only one destined to entirely develop such a scheme, by constituting its sociocracy after long initiation."¹

To co-ordinate the mind and the sentiment, to unite subjectivity and objectivity in a common work, to develop equally and harmoniously the cerebrum and the sensory ganglionic tract, and to subordinate to the domination of the reason and the feelings, acting conjointly, the actions of the body—that is what religion undertakes to perform.

¹ A. Comte : *Système de Politique Positive*, i. 700 ; Paris, 1851.

Philosophy, the cultivation of logic, the abstract sciences, tend to raise the pitch of the intelligence.

Religion, if it claims to be a revelation from God to guide man to perfection, should be calculated to develop equally and justly both the mind and the affections, to hold the balance between reason and sentiment, to co-ordinate the forces dragging man on one side into selfish isolation, and on the other burying his individuality in the general mass of humanity.

CHAPTER II

THE RELIGIOUS INSTINCTS

Difference between inorganic and organic substances—Mode in which life functionates—Life the assimilation and liberation of force—Organisms built on two types, the cellular and the axial—The latter developed from the former—Advance in development when each pole assumes a distinct office—Position in the scale of beings determined by complexity in the differentiation of parts—Life demands a certain amount of consciousness—This consciousness the measure of development—Office of the senses—Perceptions of pleasure and pain limited to objects necessary for development—Development of consciousness in man necessitated by arrest in physical development—Man's sense of pleasure and pain extends to objects in no way affecting his physical well-being—Mental effort detrimental to physical perfection—Perception a resolution of force—The object of spiritual perception the development of spiritual life, not the progress of the species—The religious sentiment an expression of the spiritual instincts of humanity—An historical survey of these instincts will show in what direction man must seek his spiritual development.

ORGANISMS may be roughly distinguished from inorganic substances by the property of development. Inertness is the attribute of lifeless existences, and evolutive life of those which are organized; that is, in the former force is latent, in the latter it is developed.

Matter postulates space; for extension is a necessary property of matter. Life demands time, for duration is a property of life. Inorganic substances *are*, organisms *become*. Chemical elements know no youth, no age.

Oxygen is the same to-day in every particular that it was yesterday, and will be to-morrow: to it, time is not. But life is a fountain of being, throwing up vital waves in rhythmic succession.

We do know that life is force, but we do not know that all force is life.

Certain inorganic structures grow, but their mode of growth is different from that of organisms. The crystal, for instance, is built up, but the force determining the crystal is a static force, whereas that developing the plant is clearly dynamic. The crystal, when its apex is formed, is complete for ever, and the force that erected it maintains the cohesion of the particles, and does nothing more; whereas the plant force thrusts forth living seeds to hand on life to another generation.

Life functionates in two ways, in the accumulation of force, and in liberation of force. This liberation takes place in two ways; in direct expenditure, or in transmission. Thus the plant by its centripetal power incorporates matter through its roots, and with matter, force; and by its centrifugal power expends it first in the evolution of leaf and flower, and then in the transfer of life to the seed.

An animal expends force in its quest for food, assimilates force through its nutriment, and propagates it through its offspring.

Growth is due to a surplusage of absorbent power over waste. Decay and death are due to the liberation of force more rapidly than the body can acquire it by assimilation. The exercise of muscle, nerve, and brain is a discharge of force.

The dynamic energy of life impels organisms to the development of the individual and the propagation of the species. For both purposes it accumulates force, and then

distributes it, first upon one point, and then upon the other. Bloom is the highest term of life reached by the flower. The rose is in its glory when covered with blossoms; after it has reached this climax, its individual life wastes; petals fall off, and leaves shrivel, for its force is turned on the transfer of life through the seeds in its scarlet pods.

Organisms are built upon two types,—about a centre, and about an axis; that is, force is concentrated on, and radiates from one point in cellular plants and cystic animalcules, whereas in trees and animals it operates along an axis, precipitating itself now on one pole and now on the other. The latter type is probably a development of the former. It is obvious that, when the accretive power is great, and the capability of the plant or animal to expend it on individual expansion is limited, it must discharge its superabundant force and matter in some other way. An individual of the Foraminifera, genus *Triloculina*, has been observed to reproduce itself by protruding its sarcoid substance through the foramina of its shell, and floating away in the shape of minute independent granules, leaving the parent shell empty. Thus the life of one individual, having felt itself straitened within the calcareous shell of its own construction, subdivided itself into some forty or fifty separate centres of action. But other Foraminifera present a different mode of reproduction. The primitive gelatinous grain secretes around itself a rigid envelope, and having grown too large for its habitation, it protrudes a portion of itself through one of the orifices, and forms a second segment. If by a process of spontaneous fission this portion becomes detached from the parent, it repeats the life and reproductive method of

the latter, and a series of monothalamous shells is the result. But if, by means of a sarcoid thread, the primitive segment maintains its connexion with its immediate offspring, a polythalamous shell is the result, and a compound form of life is presented in which the vital force acts from a succession of centres as numerous as are the buds successively protruded.

An advance is made in the mode of life when each of these centres assumes a different office; when, for instance, one becomes a force-absorbing centre, and another a force liberator. In the plant, the life acts along the axis of the structure; and though at every point it operates centripetally and centrifugally, yet at the roots the force-accumulating power is exhibited most prominently, and at the other extremity of the stalk is the chief expenditure of force. The process of nature in a tree is this. In spring, the root-fibres select from the soil those substances which are necessary for the well-being of the plant and convert them into a fluid, which ascends from the roots between the bark and the wood, gradually coagulating as it mounts. On reaching the leaves it gives off through the pores of one of the leaf-surfaces a gas, and inhaling another gas through the other surface, redescends the plant to the extremities of the roots, whose growth it determines.

The position of a plant or animal in the scale of beings is determined by the complexity in the differentiation of the parts. In the lowest forms of animal and vegetable life, every portion of the organism is equally fitted to act any part.

In the Protozoa, the lowest known form of animal life, those vital operations which we are accustomed to see carried on by elaborate apparatus, in the higher structures, have no special instruments provided for the performance

of distinct functions. "A little particle of apparently homogeneous jelly changes itself into a greater variety of form than the fabled Proteus, laying hold of its food without members, swallowing without a mouth, digesting it without a stomach, appropriating its nutritious material without absorbent vessels, feeling (if it has any power to do so) without nerves, multiplying itself without eggs."¹ A polype may be sliced into fifty pieces, and each portion will become a different animal; a fragment of begonia leaf planted in the soil, and kept at the requisite temperature, will take upon itself the functions of a seed, and will produce young plants.

In the vertebrate animals, and in man especially, the differentiation is most complete. In man, the vital action lies along an axis in which the kidneys, the stomach, the heart, and the brain, are the principal acquisitive and secretive cores. Each has a function peculiar to itself, which it does not share with any other, but all are bound together by a common necessity. The vital force may be directed on any one of these nodes, and set it in action, leaving the others partially quiescent. Thus, after a meal, the vital energy is occupied in the assimilation of food, and at that time the brain is deserted. If, immediately after a meal, intense mental exertion is required, the food remains undigested. We shall return to this point shortly.

It has been said above, that organized life has before it two clearly perceptible aims, the development of the individual, and the propagation of the kind.

Life having assimilated force, must liberate it. In order that it may assimilate and liberate matter and force, it needs a certain amount of consciousness. This may be

¹ Dr. W. B. Carpenter: *Introd. to the Study of Foraminifera*; London, 1862.

very low, where the organic structure is low; but as the differentiation of force increases in complexity, consciousness must be proportionately illumined.

Life, said Leibnitz, sleeps in the mineral, dreams in the flower, wakens in man; this is because man is the most complex in structure.

This consciousness must consist of a will to live and grow, and to produce offspring, and an instinct by means of which it may know how to grow and how to propagate its race. Without instinct it could not select what is suitable for its development from what is unsuitable, and without a will to live it would make no use of its knowledge. Two powers are seated, and must be seated, in the conscious life, a *vis motrix* and a *vis directrix*.

The instinct is obviously the measure of development. It is nicely adjusted to the necessities of each being; it is neither more nor less than is required to lead the will to its two aims. For if the instinct were not thus adjusted, the creature would expend its force in vain striving after what was unattainable; its reproductive powers would suffer, and the race dwindle and die out. A plant demands light for its proper development. One grown in a warm dark closet expends all the force derived from the soil in straining after what it cannot get; and when its powers fail, it dies without fruit. In the same way, suppose a plant craved for locomotion; it would exhaust its energies in the endeavour to uproot itself, and would die in the attempt.

In the plant we see the consciousness balancing exactly the wants of its being. In order that it may come to perfection, it requires a certain number of chemical constituents, some five or six in all, and these it has the discriminating power to select from the ground in which its

roots are fixed, and from the air in which its leaves expand.

As long as the mechanism of life and the place where it functionates are such that the locality supplies all that the life requires, the organic machinery is devoid of all other powers than the assimilation of what is necessary, and the rejection of what is unnecessary for its perfection. The elements requisite for the sustentation and development of animal life are not gathered into one spot, but are distributed over an extended area, and to collect them the animal requires locomotive power. With this, Nature has furnished it.

The animal is also given a stimulus which is not possessed by the plant; this stimulus is the sensation of pleasure, when it does that which conduces to its perfect development; and of pain, when it does that which will arrest or impede its progress. If the animal did not feel pain in its vitals, it would not eat, and would die of inanition; if it did not smart when running among thorns, it would tear itself to pieces before it was aware of what it was doing.

The senses excite the will and educate the instinct; but they do not precede or produce either. The little bird not only thinks in the egg, but it acts, for it breaks the shell to escape; and when it has issued forth, it opens its beak for food. A sense of restraint no doubt prompted the little will which set the muscles in motion and broke the shell; but it was instinct, not experience, which taught it to burst through its closed white prison into the liberty without; and instinct, not experience, bids its gape for food, rather than perform any other muscular action. The tiny creature lives, and desires to live. Life has been given to it, and with life a love of life; and it claims a

sustentation of that life as its rightful prerogative. The new-born babe enters the world with an active will and a directive instinct, and sensations to set the will in motion. To live is, to the infant, enjoyment. Desire is its first sensation; the satisfaction of desire its first pleasure; the non-satisfaction of desire its first pain; to demand satisfaction its first effort. No experience has taught it that the absorption of milk through the mouth and throat is necessary for its existence, for hitherto it has derived its nutriment through the umbilical duct. Yet it is instinctively impelled to that complex muscular action of the lips and thorax which will relieve its sensations of hunger.

The animal only receives such impressions, pleasurable or painful, as conduce to its animal development. The desires of the beast do not extend beyond the orbit of sensualism. All that surrounds the animal influences it pleasurable or painfully, only so far as the well-being of the individual or the propagation of its kind is affected.

Like the collodionized plate, the conscious self registers only one class of phenomena. The beast lives for itself, for its animal nature; it has no other pleasures, for it has no other nature. A horse is indifferent to the rainbow, because the rainbow in no way affects its well-being. The cat has a sense of smell, but this sense is graduated by the rule of the useful. The mouse is more fragrant to puss than the crust of bread, and the crust is incomparably sweeter than the rose. With the brute the *dulce* is strictly the *utile*.

That this is not mere unfounded assertion will appear from the following consideration. The nervous system is a powerful force conductor. This odinometer is an apparatus of sensitive fibres spreading over the whole surface, branching out of trunk-nerves which have thin tuberous

roots called ganglions, which are intimately united, and transmit the impressions received from the outermost nerve to the terminus of the brain, which registers all such impressions as ideas.

The exterior sensation extended over the whole surface of the body is called the touch. Extremes of cold and heat are injurious to the system. The instant that the touch encounters what is intensely cold or hot, it sends a message flying to the brain, which at once sets the will in motion, and the will acting upon the muscles withdraws the nervous surface from the position that excited it. Here, then, is a force reacting and producing equipoise.

In some localities of the body the sensibility is gathered up, and undergoes peculiar modification. At the extremity of a cluster of nerves is spread a mirror of diminutive surface, on which are refracted with inimitable precision the play of light, and the permanent and transient details of the horizon which it embraces. In the midst of another series of nerves is stretched a membrane which vibrates at every sonorous undulation of the air. Other nerves, delicately woven into an extremely sensitive tissue, detect those minute particles floating in the air, too small to be distinguished by the eye, which, if seen, would confuse the vision as effectually as a shower veils the landscape. The pulsations of light and of sound transmit force through the optic and auditory nerves to the brain, where the force is resolved; its resolution is the formation of an idea. Action taken upon ideas expends the accumulated force. Now the brute never acts upon any ideas except those which conduce to its two aims, its personal well-being and its propagation; consequently, we may fairly conclude that its brain only resolves a certain class of forces, and that another class appreciable by man are not cognizable by the brute.

Man differs from the beast in many important particulars. Every other animal sensible of cold and heat is provided by nature with clothing and shelter. It has fur, or plumage, or scales, or it is given an underground habitation beyond the reach of extremes of temperature, and its nervous tissue is coarse and but slightly sensitive. But the nervous surface of man's body is more acutely appreciative than that of any other animal, and yet he is introduced into the world in a state of nudity. Consequently, he must have artificial clothing. But to clothe himself he must be provided with a faculty above the instinct of the brute; or rather, the animal instinct must be developed to meet this contingency.

Thus, intelligence is a necessity of man's animal nature. Every creature is furnished with a faculty designed to meet a necessity of its being, and, moreover, that faculty is exactly commensurate with the necessity. The instinct is not only a requisite of the well-being, but it is the measure of the well-being.

If we apply what has been said above on the absorption of force and matter and their after liberation by living organisms, we shall see that in this case also nature preserves equilibrium. In the sheep, the matter and force taken in with the food are assimilated, and the force produces the matter in the shape of wool. In man the force and matter derived from nutriment have another development, and produce brain, and thus enable him artificially to protect himself from cold.

Now if we look at man's faculties, we see that their sweep extends far beyond the term of the development of his sensual life. The intelligence of the Andaman islander may possibly not over-step this limit. He knows, and desires to know, perhaps, nothing but what will prevent the sun

from blistering his skin. He is a naked monkey, *plus* the faculty of covering his nakedness. But with the vast majority of the races of men it is otherwise. Their faculties extend beyond these narrow bounds. Through eye and ear enter gleams that illumine a phase of life other than that which is animal, and fill it with longings and impulses to which the material existence is a stranger. The human mind is open to a chain of pleasurable impressions in no way conducive to the preservation of man's sensual being, and to the perpetuation of his race. He derives pleasure from harmonies of colour and grace of form, and from melodious succession of notes. His animal life needs neither. He is conscious of instincts which the gratification of passion does not satisfy, for they are beside and beyond the animal instincts. He feels that his orbit is an ellipse around two foci, that there are two centres of attraction to him, an animal consciousness, and that which we will call a spiritual consciousness. Unless we suppose a second centre, a series of instincts, sensations, and volitions remain unaccounted for. Man derives his liveliest gratification and acutest pain from objects to which his animal consciousness is indifferent. The rainbow charms him. Why? Because the sight conduces to the welfare of his spiritual being. An infant manifests these instincts in a pronounced manner. It dreads and hates darkness: light fills it with ecstasy. It distinguishes between persons. The solicitations of some are received with smiles, those of others meet with an opposite response. It crows with delight at the sight of a rose; it laughs with pleasure on hearing a tune. A pictured angel pleases it, a painted devil appals it. All these instincts are utterly waste, unless we suppose that there is another consciousness in man beside that of the animal.

Man's structure is axidal, as has already been said. Towards the lower pole are the seats of the animal apparatus, towards the higher pole is the spiritual apparatus. To the lower pole belong the reproductive and the digestive organs—the latter the apparatus for acquiring force, the former that for disengaging the force requisite for propagation. At the higher end of the axis is the brain, the seat of the intellect. The vital power can, at will, be precipitated on any point. Sentiment stands as it were on the fulcrum, and inclines either to the side of the animal or to that of the spiritual nature according to circumstances.

When, as among savages, the vital energy is expended on the sensual life, the brain is inactive. When, as among men of intellect, the vital force is directed upon the brain, the sensual life is enfeebled. This is capable of direct proof. Intense mental application, involving great waste of the nervous tissues, and a corresponding consumption of nervous matter for their repair, is found to be accompanied by a cessation in the production of sperm cells. The reverse is also true; an undue production of spermatozoa involves cerebral inactivity.¹ Consequently, mental activity is directly antagonistic to reproductiveness, for it uses up

¹ Intellectual activity does not depend on the size of the brain, nor altogether on the amount of surface exposed to corrosion, but on the amount of phosphorus it contains. The granular particles in vitalizing sperm appear to be almost, if not quite, pure phosphorus. (*Cyclopædia of Anatomy and Physiology*, and *Journal of Psychological Medicine*, No xxi.)

	In Infants.	In Youth.	In Adults.	In Old Men.	In Idiots.
Solid constituents in one hundred parts of brain of man	17.21	25.74	27.49	26.15	29.07
Of these solid constituents the phosphorus amounts to	0.8	1.65	1.80	1.00	0.85
Percentage of phosphorus in the solid constituents	4.65	6.41	6.54	3.82	2.91

that force which would otherwise be employed in the formation of cells for the transmission of life.

The antagonism of the two poles of consciousness is indeed sufficiently apparent to all, and finds expression in such sayings as that of the Wise Man: "The corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things;"¹ and that of St Paul: "With the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."² When the animal nature is made the object of attention, and when to it the intelligence and affections are rendered subservient, the mind acts solely as an animal instinct, and the sensations of pleasure derived from the acquisition of knowledge, from the exercise of reason, the perception of the beautiful, etc., disappear. On the other hand, when the intellect is highly wrought, the sense of pleasure and pain derived from things beyond the animal horizon is intensified, and the physical nature languishes.

Man is conscious of an apparent strain on the link of cohesion, as though the vital force strove to concentrate itself on the spiritual pole, and resolve the motion of life into a revolution about it, by rupturing the tie which binds it to the animal pole.

The surface of the right hemisphere of the human brain in square inches	332.5
The surface of the left hemisphere	326.5
Total amount of surface	659.0

Surface of a pig's brain	95.8
„ sheep's brain	62.4
„ dog's brain	40.56
„ cat's brain	20.28
„ rabbit's brain	9.36

¹ Wisdom ix. 18.

² Rom. vii. 25.

The perception of pleasure or pain is a resolution of force. This is evident in the life of the animal. Where there is no pleasurable or painful sensation there is no arrest and disintegration of force. A clown placed before a painting by Raphael is insensible to its beauty. The waves of light pass through his brain as through a sheet of clear glass. But a connoisseur before it is sensible of delight, because the pulsations of light are stopped and resolved in his mind, which like a convex mirror focuses and refracts the force, and like a lens resolves it. The formation of an idea, as has already been said, is an assimilation and alteration of force, and a stream of ideas passing through the brain leaves evidence of its material action in the excretion of alkaline phosphates by the kidneys. The resolution of muscle, on the contrary, produces lithates.

There seems to be—but this is merely suggested, not insisted upon—a spiritual force as well as a material force, and a process of spiritual generation going on in the ideal world, not unlike that with which we are familiar in the physical world.

Three hundred years ago, let us say, a man of genius writes a book. His ideas are thrown out like so many spores, and they lie imbedded in printer's ink till I read his book. They at once take root and develop in my brain, and I, in conversation or in writing, transmit them to others. We find the same ideas, the same speculations, the same plays of fancy, reproduced generation after generation, with modifications peculiar to the time, as though they were living descendants of original ideas which were brought into being before the dawn of history. But this is mere conjecture, and must be laid aside for what is provable.

The alteration of force in the physical world is great, and

in the modifications force undergoes it assumes a variety of expressions, as light, heat, electricity. In like manner, force modified by the brain appears as volition, cognition, and feeling.

In animal life, pleasure and pain indicate the resolution of force, and we can measure the force evolved by the force absorbed. In spiritual life, pleasure and pain indicate likewise the resolution of force. We know that force has been absorbed and evolved by the process of thought.

The object of life, the object for which pleasure and pain operate, is the development of the animal and the propagation of its kind.

The object of the spiritual consciousness is the development of the spiritual life. Growth is due to excess of assimilating power over liberating power. Through life the spiritual life can grow and develop. To every plant and animal there is a term of development beyond which it does not extend. What is the term of the spiritual life?

The fact of man being awake to pleasures unconnected with his material well-being assures him that in him is a dynamic force urging him to some point. But what is that point?

To these questions two answers have been given. One is, that the presence of these instincts and volitions tend to the perfection of the species.

The other is, that they indicate an individual perfection in another stage of existence.

The first of these answers has satisfied the Chinese mind, which considers political and social organization as the object upon which every faculty not expended on animal and individual development is to be directed.

The second has been the answer of all those peoples who have found expression for their belief in religion.

According to Auguste Comte, the founder of Positivism, the human race, conceived as a continuous whole, is a concrete existence. This great collective Being is in a condition of progress towards perfection. All generations of men are indissolubly united into a single image, combining all the power over the mind of the idea of posterity, with our best feelings toward the present which surrounds us, and aspirations after a perfected future. The present lives and rejoices on the wisdom acquired, and the knowledge accumulated by the past; and as the present is wiser and more knowing than the past, so will the future be wisest and most knowing. The good of the human race is the ultimate standard of right and wrong, and moral discipline consists in cultivating the utmost possible repugnance towards all conduct injurious to the general well-being. The dominant religion of the Chinese is of the same nature. The Chinese mind was sluggishly rolling towards Deism, when Confucius suddenly diverted it into Positivism. He taught that man was a member of a mighty organism, the perfection of which was the co-ordination of every part, and of this organism the emperor was the apex. "If you desire to establish your institutions on the securest basis," said Confucius, "educate the young, diffuse intelligence in every direction; but insist chiefly on the study of that science which surpasses every other, the science of political economy, which enables you to turn all other kinds of knowledge to a practical account."

It is very doubtful whether this solution of the question is the correct one. It is open to the following objections: Intellectual development necessarily leads to a deterioration of the *physique* of the species; high civilization introduces a multitude of disorders unknown to savage life; and

such deterioration must end in the extinction of the race. In a simple and barbarous state of society, the weak and deformed die as children. Civilization tends to accumulate and propagate disease and malformation; for science, and the attention which in a cultivated race can be bestowed on the infirm, keep the diseased and deformed alive, and suffer them to breed and spread their disorder and malformation through generations of children. In savage life the process of natural selection tends to raise the type of man, the inferior types dying out; but civilized life prevents the operation of this natural law, and therefore tends to the deterioration of the race.

The lowest organisms are those with the greatest powers of reproduction. The yeast fungus in a few hours propagates itself through a large mass of wort. The microscopic *Protococcus nivalis* in a night reddens many square miles of snow. The Protozoa have powers of reproduction almost beyond belief. Whole districts are suddenly blighted by the aphis, which multiplies at a prodigious rate by internal gemmation. Among Mammalia, beginning with small rodents, which quickly reach maturity, and which produce large litters, as we advance step by step to the higher animals, in proportion as intelligence lightens does reproductive power diminish. Among human beings the same law is observable. The poor, who exert muscle rather than decompose brain matter, have large families. Among the highly educated, who expend their force in the corrosion of nerve, small families are found. Every year that intellectual activity advances, reproductive activity falls back. The reason is, that sperm cells are composed of the same constituents as neurine, and that the vital force, if liberated by decomposition of brain matter, is diverted from the development of sperm cells for the transfer of life.

Again, the progress of the species is towards social unity, which is the differentiation of functions which in an unsocial state were exercised by the same individual. The unsocial barbarian is his own smith, tailor, builder, &c. As the body politic advances, one man exercises the trade of smith, another of tailor, and a third of builder.

A further advance is made when there is a whitesmith, a blacksmith, and a goldsmith; a draper, a tailor, and a clothier; and in like manner trades become more and more minutely divided up. In a generation or two it will be one man's trade to hold a nail and another man's to strike it. Whether such a subdivision of labour is really indicative of progress of the species is open to question.

Men's interests are too self-centred to make them find solid consolation amidst present trouble in the reflection that a thousand years hence the race will have worked itself clear of such things. And on the whole it will be found that the amount of happiness in a race not highly civilized is far more general, and its sum total far higher, than that of an over-civilized race. The rude and simple Swiss peasantry are thoroughly happy, whilst in a large city like London, the upper stratum of society is engaged in nervous quest of pleasure which ever eludes them, whilst the lower is plunged in misery. Besides, what is really meant by the progress of the species? "The only tangible superiority of a generation over that which has preceded it, appears to consist in its having within its reach a larger accumulation of scientific or literary materials for thought, or a greater mastery over the forces of inanimate nature; advantages not without their drawbacks, and at any rate of a somewhat superficial kind. Genius is not progressive from age to age; nor yet the practice, however it may be with the science, of moral excellence. And, as this pro-

gress of the species is only supposed, after all, to be an improvement of its condition during men's first lifetime, the belief—call it, if you will, but a dream—of a prolonged existence after death reduces the whole progress to insignificance. There is more, even as regards quantity of sensation, in the spiritual well-being of one single soul, with an existence thus continuous, than in the increased physical or intellectual prosperity, during one lifetime, of the entire human race.”¹

The development of social life can moreover be accounted for without having recourse to all those instincts directive of what we call the spiritual consciousness of man.

The bees exhibit a marvellous example of a society in which each individual works for the common weal. The workers devote themselves to the labours of constructing cells and storing them with honey, the nurses to the education of the larvæ. But nature has not provided the bees with a special instinct for the elaboration of their social economy. The workers labour to accumulate food for their own eating, and the preservation and enjoyment of life is their sole motive of action. How, then, does nature produce this commonwealth? By an arrest in the development of the workers. They are sexless. Every carnivorous animal is provided with physical means of satisfying its appetite; it is given weapons forged on nature's anvil. The lion has power to leap on his prey, claws wherewith to rend it, and jaws of prodigious strength wherewith to crush its bones. Man comes into the world wholly unprovided with natural weapons. Their development has been arrested, and this arrest throws him into corporate life, to ensure his preservation. The arrest in the

¹ Lowndes : *Philosophy of Primary Beliefs*, p. 235 ; 1865.

development of fur or horny hide is another mode adopted by nature for stimulating man's contrivance.

In China, where political economy has been the religion for two thousand four hundred years, it has failed in its task; for, instead of being progressive, it has proved stationary: invention, art, speculation, are at a standstill.

The Religious Sentiment is the feeling of man after an individual aim other than that of his animal nature; and as that which is individual must necessarily interest and excite him to activity more readily than that which affects the general good, it is more likely in its nature to prove a developing stimulus. That such a feeling should exist is a fairly presumable proof that it is not illusive. The idea of altruism is evidence that the subordination of the personal will to the general welfare will lead to progress in social and political economy; and the idea of egoism is evidence that the pursuit of individual aims will lead to individual progress. It is against the analogy of nature that all those instincts and faculties the possession of which distinguishes man from the brute should have no positive aim. The beast conceives no idea, nor makes that idea an object of desire, unless it conduce to its development. The rabbit never imagines the possibility of its eating flesh, because animal food is not necessary for its development. Those objects for which man's animal nature craves have real being, and so probably have those objects for which his mental and emotional nature cries out. What we call instinct is a desire to follow out a law of our being, and the object of all law is the perfection and happiness of the creature.

In tracing the religious instincts of humanity, we are tracing the working out of the law of its well-being.

Wherever a religious instinct appears it must be noted, for it is the voice of the spiritual nature clamouring for food necessary for its life and perfection. Wherever a religious instinct leads awrong, it is not that the instinct is wrong, but that it runs counter to or overrides correlative instincts. When man has pursued one instinct across and athwart other instincts, which it tramples down in its fanaticism, he fails through exaggeration.

Religious instincts resemble political instincts. Every form of government is based on a right principle, but where other and equally right principles have been overlooked, misery ensues. Political mistakes have their origin in a lack of knowledge. There were ten famines in France in one century; the country had bred soldiers, not farmers.

When a religious instinct produces error—that is, when religion becomes superstition, there is something wrong in its organization. There is an undue preponderance given to this truth, and there is a forgetfulness of that truth. Every phase of religion the world has yet seen has broken down through exaggeration of one truth at the expense of another.

The history of religious experiments is exceedingly instructive, for it shows us, first, what are the religious instincts of humanity; and, secondly, failure, through imperfect co-ordination of these instincts. A review of the religions of the world will show us of what nature that religion must be which alone will satisfy humanity—a religion in which those inherent tendencies of the mind and soul which produced Fetishism, Anthropomorphism, Polytheism, Monotheism, Spiritualism, Idealism, Positivism, will find their co-ordinate expression; a religion in which all the sacred systems of humanity may meet, as in a Field

of the Cloth of Gold, to adorn it with their piety, their mysticism, their mythology, their subtlety of thought, their splendour of ceremonial, their adaptability to progress, their elasticity of organization—and, meeting, may exhaust their own resources—

“By this to sicken their estates, that never
They shall abound as formerly.”¹

¹ Henry VIII., Act i. s. 1.

CHAPTER III

THE ORIGIN OF THE RELIGIOUS IDEA

Two principal instincts in man ; the craving to find a cause for every effect, and the prosecution of an ideal of perfection—Analysis of consciousness—Rudimentary beliefs—The belief in causation—The idea of cause not simple—Is it trustworthy?—Necessary for the development of mankind—The belief in causation makes man seek a cause for every effect man sees—He believes this cause to be a will resembling his own—The ideal of perfection—The selective faculty—The imagination—Is the imagination illusive?—Concurrence of thought and sentiment in religion—Necessity for their co-ordination—Directions taken by the great races of mankind in the pursuit of the ideal.

AMONG the instincts of humanity, not shared by the brute creation, and which have no directive action on the material life, and exert but a secondary and subsidiary influence over social progress, are two which demand a close scrutiny.

The first of these instincts is the craving man feels to discover a cause to account for every phenomenon. The second is the prosecution of an ideal of perfection. We shall examine each of these instincts in turn. Man's consciousness has been divided by Sir William Hamilton into cognitions, feelings, and volitions. He does not affirm that these three operations—thinking, feeling, and acting—make up the sum total of the conscious life, but that they constitute the broad and clearly-defined groups into which

the data of consciousness may be sorted. This arrangement is more perfect than that of Reid, who divided the powers of the mind into understanding and will—comprehending under the latter, not only the active force precipitating action, but also the affections and passions.

The cognitions may be subdivided into presentations, external and internal; representations, including remembrances and acts of imagination; and lastly, notions, or thoughts proper.

The external presentations are those in which the mind by means of a sense is brought in contact with some external object, and from it receives an impression. In such, the sense is the vehicle through which mind and matter are brought into relation; and where a sense is deficient the corresponding ideas cannot be formed. Thus, the man born blind cannot conceive what is meant by the term scarlet.

The internal presentations are those in which the mind is brought into contact with the self, the indivisible being which constitutes our individuality. Such are the percepts of pleasure, anger, desire.

These perceptions are simple and indivisible, and escape definition. They are the ultimate atoms of the inner consciousness, ready to enter into endless combinations and undergo countless permutations, but not reducible to any prevenient ideas.

Built up on these precepts are certain rudimentary beliefs, so universal and so early acquired, that they deserve to be considered as the radicals of other beliefs.

Such is the belief in causation. An instinct prompts man to seek a cause, because he is strongly convinced of the truth of the doctrine of causality. Without this belief he would make no progress in the world, for the

world would be to him but an assemblage of chance results, and ethics and science would cease to be studied.

What do we mean by cause? All that makes a thing pass from not being to being is a primary cause; all that modifies an already existing being is a secondary cause. If a body in motion impinge on another body at rest, and disturb it, the secondary cause is the motive force of the former. But there is a presumption that some cause set the first body in motion. Secondary causality represents a concatenation of objects forming a series, which terminates in the first cause; and man instinctively gropes up the chain of secondary causes in search of the self-generating spring of motion which he calls the first cause.

The idea of cause is not a simple idea, for it contains (1) The idea of being; and (2) the relation of that which passes from not being to being. The idea of being is not sufficient to constitute the idea of cause, for it is quite possible to conceive being apart from causative force. A thing *is*: we cannot define what we mean by this statement, but it conveys to us a perfectly intelligible proposition. Let us abstract all that is not it, and let us endeavour to suppose no other being which may have produced it, or taken part in its production. The possibility of transition from not being to being becomes to us utterly inconceivable. We not only do not see the possibility of the emergence of being out of not being, but we see in this idea the impossibility of this emergence. They are ideas which exclude one another.¹

Whatever passes from a condition of not being to being requires something distinct from itself to produce this transition. Such is a primary belief of mankind, a belief wholly ineradicable, upon which even those metaphysicians

¹ Balmez: *Fundamental Philosophy*, book x.

who deny causality are constrained to act at every moment of their lives.

Is the belief in causation a trustworthy belief, or is it an illusion ?

Mr. J. S. Mill adopts the latter view. He says: "The law of causation, the recognition of which is the main pillar of inductive science, is but the familiar truth, that invariability of succession is found by observation to obtain between every fact in nature, and some other fact which has preceded it; independently of all consideration respecting the ultimate mode of production of phenomena, and of every other question regarding the nature of 'things in themselves.'"¹

The idea of causality he derives from experience of a regular succession of phenomena which we suppose will continue permanently successive.

It is neither our purpose, nor is this the place, to combat this view; we will merely note a few facts tending to confirm the popular conviction in the reliability of the belief in causality.

An infant has from the beginning an idea of cause. It will shrink when carried down stairs, though it has never experienced injury from a fall. It is curious to observe in the growing mind of an infant how invariably it looks for a cause to all that affects it. Moreover, perception of cause does necessarily attach itself to one term in a repeating series of two, and not to the other. The change of the moon and the flow of the tides have been observed to synchronize. Men attribute the tidal flow to the influence of the changing moon; but cannot suppose that the waxing and waning of the luminary are ruled by the ebb and flow of the tide.

¹ Mill: *Logic*, i. 359.

Successions have been observed to be invariable, and it is presumed that they will maintain their invariability ; and yet the idea of cause has not attached itself to either of the phenomena. Day follows night ; and yet, as has been observed by Reid, man does not regard night as causing day.

The belief in causation grows stronger by experience ; indeed, experience educates the belief, just as sensation educates the animal instinct. If experience did not exist, we should not know that causality was possible, because the idea of being does not necessarily embrace the idea of force. Force might be conceived, but we could not know whether anything in reality corresponded with it. We should thus have the *notion* of the force, but not the *notice* of its existence.

The belief in causation is necessary for man's development—not for his animal development, but for the progress of his higher being. The brute has little idea of cause ; it perceives only secondary causes. Experience teaches the rook, *e.g.*, to dread a gun. It knows that a shot from the barrel causes pain and death, but it does not care to inquire why it does so ; consequently, a brute will never discover the composition of gunpowder. If causation be an illusive belief, it is singular that it should have not broken down under the experience of millions, and that it should have led man out of barbarism into civilization. According to the zeal with which man investigates causes, so is his progress. The savage who halts at secondary causes is in the same position as the beast.

The rudest mind is conscious of having force located in it, and it recognises the will as the seat of this force. From no other source can man's acts, even the most trifling, be deduced. Though his consciousness is not always sufficiently

sensitive to register every manifestation of the will, yet the will is regarded as operative, even though he is unconscious that it is so. Every step taken in walking is attributable to the will, though the consciousness does not indicate the direction taken by it upon this or that muscle. Nevertheless, we know that, were the will to be arrested, the power to walk would simultaneously fail. Volition being ordinarily considered as in itself a force, it is also regarded as free. Man supposes that his will is free, and that his actions are directly attributable to this independent power. "It is a sort of doing violence to his own instinctive belief, when he tries to persuade himself that his own acts of will are mere passive effects of remoter causes. He can only train himself into this belief by a somewhat severe logical process."¹

In the material world, man is a spectator of changes taking place among objects destitute of intelligent volition. He recognises movements which he has not set in motion, and results brought about through no instrumentality of his own. He is constrained to acknowledge the presence of power over which he can exercise no control, which did not originate with himself, and which is mightier than himself.

In man, mind operates upon matter. Where matter is set in motion independently of man, he looks for a cause, and expects to discover it, in a force outside of himself similar to that working within him. That force must be seated either in the object moved, or it must be outside and, as it were, behind it, operating through it. A low intelligence or inaccurate observation may be arrested at inferior causes; but as reason lightens and enlarges, and as observation acquires sharpness by use, the understanding pierces beyond the mediate to the immediate, and along a

¹ Lowndes, p. 191.

series of subsidiary causes stretches towards the self-generating spring of movement.

Sight is a sense wherewith the vast majority of men have been endowed by nature ; but all do not possess the faculty in an equal degree of delicacy and power. To see correctly is rather the result of education than of superior organization of the eye. It is the same with the mental powers of vision. Some see through effects to causes with greater penetration than others, but to be able to shell off inferior causes till the core of primary force is reached can only be performed by an educated intellect.

It was a legitimate inference from the known to the unknown drawn by man, when he attributed the force in nature to a will like in kind to that he was conscious existed in himself. A power of free volition within or outside all matter in motion was a rational solution to the problem of effects of which man could not account himself the cause. Such is the origin of the idea of God ;—of God, whether many, inhabiting each brook, and plant, and breeze, and planet, or as being a world-soul, or as a supreme cause, the creator and sustainer of the universe.

The common consent of mankind has been adduced as a proof of a tradition of a revelation in past times ; but the fact that most races of men believe in one or more deities proves nothing more than that all men have drawn the same inference from the same premises. It is idle to speak of a *Sensus Numinis* as existing as a primary conviction in man, when the conception may be reduced to more rudimentary ideas. The Revelation is in man's being, in his conviction of the truth of the principle of Causation, and thus it is a revelation made to every rational being.

M. Boucher de Perthes' testimony is remarkable : " It is impossible for man to extinguish in himself his conviction

that there is a God. Doubtless the insane form very false ideas of the Divinity; some believe themselves to be God, others declare war against Him; but I have never heard of a case in which madness consisted in disbelief in Him: the insane are not materialists. It has been said that children derive their idea of God from the instruction of others, and that it is never original. I am convinced of the contrary. The smallest, before one has told them a word about Him, have an instinctive feeling of a mysterious power, which they personify without defining, and from which they expect something good, and sometimes also something evil. They are subject to hallucinations, they fear the dark, they do not like to be alone, they are superstitious, without knowing what superstition is: Croquemitaine was not revealed to them, they invented him. I myself was a child at a period when religion was proscribed, in which one did not even venture to allude to it: the churches were shut, and the priests were persecuted. Nevertheless, I remember that the aspect of the sky made me dream; I always saw in it something that was not of the world. When I spoke stammeringly about it—for I expressed myself with difficulty—I was silenced, but my mind recurred to the idea. I searched there above for something that I did not see, but whose existence I divined. Yes! the intuition of God was in me. Since then I have questioned many little children on this intuition, and I have discovered it in nearly all. The child that thinks itself abandoned or threatened, and has vainly called its mother, has recourse to this invisible power which its instinct reveals to it. It invokes this with tears and cries. In those moments of anguish, let a light appear, and it is instantly calm; it is God who appears to it.”¹

¹ Boucher de Perthes : *Des Idées Innées*. p. 15 : Paris, 1867.

We pass now to the instinct impelling man to pursue an ideal of perfection. The different stages of life in the world may be expressed by the difference in selective power. In the phenomena of chemical affinity, the material substance chooses, among the atomic elements, those which will concur to form a certain compound. In all organic life a similar process prevails; the substance chooses among the elements surrounding it those which will concur to form and preserve a definite type to which its vegetative force instinctively tends. In the higher forms of animal life, this substance, already trenching on individualization, selects among the elements of its intellectual determinations those which concur with the pleasure and conservation of the material self. In human life there is a substance, immaterial, which selects, among the elements of its determinations, those which tend to enhance the pleasures and develop the faculties of the immaterial self. But in this case, because man has got at once a material and an immaterial self, his selection is constantly oscillating betwixt those objects which conduce to material, and those conducing to immaterial pleasures. Man's course being an ellipse around two foci, there is a constant tendency of each focus to counteract the attraction of the other, and make life revolve around that one alone.

Nothing is more striking than the antagonism in man's nature between the material and immaterial impulses. The animal life has its definite aim, and its instincts all tend towards the accomplishment of this aim. But besides the centripetal force, there is a strong centrifugal force, which impels him to burst through the ring of sensual pleasure, and fly away into unexplored regions where fresh pleasures are constantly opening out upon his perception.

Material and immaterial life have their parallel stages, the one parasitic, the other independent.

The first stage of material life—the parasitic mode—is the plant.

The second stage of material life—the independent mode—is the animal.

The first stage of immaterial life—the parasitic mode—is the intelligence of the being reduced to animal instinct.

The second stage of immaterial life—the independent mode—is the intelligence of man.

This intelligence determines the growth of the immaterial life by *selection* ; and that not arbitrarily, but according to an instinct of what is good, and conducive to the aim of the spiritual life, just as selection made by the instinct governing the material life conduces to the aim of the animal life.

The selection is formed by representing before the mind's eye a number of objects or sensations, and choosing from among them those which instinct or experience points out to be best. The imagination then combines all that is most conducive to pleasure, and forms of this combination an ideal of perfection which it presents to the affections, and by engaging them starts the will in the pursuit of this ideal.

In the animal the imagination plays but an inconspicuous part. It only produces before the beast's interior vision the animal-self tasting pleasure and shrinking from danger, and it surrounds that self with images representing the circumstances leading to pleasure or danger. All the brute's mental pictures are on one or the other model, and a slight modification of circumstances is all that distinguishes the different images raised by this faculty. In the animal, the imagination has little or no educative

power. But with man it is not so. Were man destined to a mere sensual life, the imagination would not present him with more than a kaleidoscopic series of changes of the same pleasurable sensations pictured in his mind. But it has a higher rôle. Memory exhibits to the intelligence realized facts, but imagination shoots ahead to consequences. It is a faculty which can in a measure take the place of the senses, and thus suppress the last link that subordinates the operations of the intellect to the perceptions received by means of the special apparatus of the organism. At will, it exercises the functions of sight and hearing; and by it the immaterial self can transport and fix its faculties of sight and hearing, untrammelled by the necessities of time and space, on abstract images to which it can give a fictitious being. Nothing limits, nothing restrains, this vehement faculty. It flies before realization, bearing a flaming torch to light the way, and incite the will to follow. It inspires hope, but never satiates it. It arouses inquiry, it quickens speculation; it never drops into their wake. If a spark were to fall on the representative faculty in the brute, it would start from its lethargy and rise in the scale of beings. But the beast cannot conceive an ideal, and therefore it remains stationary.

With man, the attainment of his desire never altogether satisfies him. He has a craving for something beyond, and he leaves those things that are behind, and presses after his ideal image, which may be a mirage painted by a delusive faculty, but which is probably an instinct leading him to a distant perfection.

The idealizing tendency of the imagination is a continual process of selection, and therefore of judgment between the desirable and undesirable, and of discrimina-

tion between perceptions of pleasure and pain. The ideal of one mind or of one race of men may not be the same as the ideal of another; but it does not follow that they are contradictory, it only shows that each is partial; and a study of human ideals will exhibit them as having a certain reciprocal appropriateness, which indicates a type to which they all tend, a perfection which will harmonize all. Thus, to one man red may seem the most perfect colour. It was the fashion in Manchester some years ago; and gowns, ties, coaches, windows, everything was scarlet. Another man, or group of men, may consider blue the perfection of colour. A Chinese makes yellow his ideal. Each only sees a portion or side of that perfection, which takes the three ideals and binds them into a glorious bow of graduated colour.

The ideal of perfection, whether of power, or of wisdom, or of justice, or of goodness, or of beauty, is always beyond man; that is, he can conceive a perfection beyond man's attainment. His idea of causation has led his intelligence to the conception of a final cause, which he calls God. Naturally his ideal adheres to this intellectual concept, and in the final cause he seeks to focus all his conceptions of perfection; and thus God comes to be regarded as all-mighty, all-wise, the perfection of justice, of goodness, and of beauty.

Is the imaginative faculty illusive? Is the sense of goodness, beauty, justice, like the belief in causation, to be pronounced arbitrary and deceptive?

Sad would it be for humanity were it so. Man has in him as rooted a conviction that he has a spirit capable of growth, as that he has a body capable of growth. He has experimental certainty that it can grow, and that it tastes new pleasures at every stage of growth. Without an ideal

to move before him, like the pillar of fire that guided Israel, there would be no poets, painters, or musicians. The mightiest effort of a Michael Angelo would then be the construction of a bark wigwam, and the proudest achievement of a Shakespeare, monkey imitation.

Man has two needs, that of knowing, and that of loving. "Every religious state," says Comte, "demands the continuous concurrence of two spontaneous influences: the one objective, essentially intellectual; the other subjective, purely moral. Thus, religion relates at once to the reason and to the sentiment; of these either alone would not be suitable to establish a veritable unity, either individual or collective. On one side, the intelligence makes us conceive outside of us a power sufficiently superior to demand the constant subordination of our existence. On the other side, it is equally indispensable that one should be animated with a sentiment capable of co-ordinating all the others. These two fundamental conditions have a natural tendency to combine, since external submission necessarily seconds interior discipline—which, in turn, spontaneously disposes to external submission."¹ Again: "The religious sentiment reposes on the permanent combination of two equally fundamental conditions, loving and believing, which, though profoundly distinct, must naturally concur. Each of these, besides its proper necessity, adds to the other a complement indispensable for its full efficacy."²

Religion is always the expression of an idea. Man conceives the notion of a great cause; guided by his feelings, by a process of selection he conceives an ideal, and this ideal becomes to him an object of passionate devotion.

¹ *Système de Politique Positive*, ii. 11 ; Paris, 1852.

² *Ib.* p. 17.

If reason and affection be not co-ordinated, religion resolves itself into philosophy or mysticism.

A religion which is purely speculative is no religion at all; it is a philosophy. A religion which consists of emotion only is nothing but sentimentalism, and is often gross superstition. Religious sentiment is sometimes extravagant mysticism or abject terrorism. Either form is injurious, as it is an exaggeration of one side of religion at the expense of the other. The aspirations of the heart must be controlled by the reason, and the intelligence must be humanized by the affections.

The search after a supreme cause has taken two main forms, monotheism and polytheism. The Semitic races seized on the idea of one force, the cause of every effect. The Aryan deified secondary forces manifest in nature. The Turanian cowered before force, and inquired not whence it came and where it was seated. And the Chinese proclaimed that the inquiry was futile, and of no practical importance.

The great watersheds of language have been the great watersheds of thought. In the search after the ideal these great races have taken different directions. The Turanian race, impressed with a vague and childlike sense of the mysterious, has not advanced into the idealizing stage. God, to the nomads of Northern Asia, is awful, undefined. They feel His presence about them, above them, and with dazzled and bewildered mind seek to know nothing more. The ideal of the Chinese is a perfectly organized government.

The Shemite grasped the notion of an ideal of power, and his god is the force of nature personified, the Mighty One riding on the whirlwind, touching the mountains, and lo, they smoke, uttering His voice in the thunder.

shaking the cedar-trees, dividing the seas with His breath.

The Aryan, with a rich poetic fancy, beheld everywhere an ideal of goodness; he saw beautiful Iris in the sky bearing the rain goblet, zoned with colour; foam-forms rising out of the sea radiant with beauty, lovely gliding shapes in the streams, and dreams of grace haunting the groves.

The philosophic study of the ideals of the human race, and the theories of causation it has formed, will show us what the religion of humanity must become to co-ordinate all its faculties; and thus we shall see, in Comte's expressive words, that religion was "first spontaneous, then inspired, and is finally demonstrated;" and, also what Comte did not see, that it is always the same.

CHAPTER IV

THE IDEA OF IMMORTALITY

Prevalence of the idea of immortality—Difficulty of forming negative ideas—Want of discrimination between objective and ideal existence—The instinct of self-conservation—Reasons inducing man to believe in immortality : 1. Fear of death ; 2. Mode of accounting for anomalies of life—Retribution—Forms assumed by the belief in immortality : 1. Degeneration ; 2. Continuous existence similar to that in life ; 3. Metempsychosis ; 4. Cyclical life ; 5. Development—Conjectures on mode of life after death—Evil effects produced by the belief—Demonology and witchcraft.

THE idea of the immortality of the soul is far more widely spread than the idea of the existence of one or more Gods. Barbarous people, standing on the lowest rung of the scale of civilization, incapable of the smallest mental advance, unable to draw inferences which are self-suggestive, and to argue from palpable analogies—and this is all that is required for conceiving the idea of God—are nevertheless found to believe explicitly or implicitly in the perpetuation of life after death. The aborigines of California, when first visited, were as near beasts as men ever become. The missionaries likened them to “herds of swine, who neither worshipped the true and only God, nor adored false deities ;” yet they must have had some vague notion of an after-life, for the writer who paints the darkest picture of their condition remarks, “I saw them frequently putting shoes on

the feet of the dead, which seems to indicate that they entertain the idea of a journey after death."¹ The natives of Australia, who have no idea of God, believe that after death their souls mount to the clouds, or cross the ocean to a distant land.²

The existence of funeral rites is a proof that those who practise them have some idea, indistinct enough perhaps, that the dead are not annihilated.

The prevalence of a belief in the continued vitality of the soul after death is evidence that the idea must rest on an exceedingly simple basis.

The conception of a deity requires some mental exertion; the conception of immortality requires none. Given the consciousness of personality, of a self the seat of the will, the thoughts, and the feelings, and the belief in the perpetuity of its life follows at once.

For the supposition that death annihilates the conscious principle could not be entertained by an unphilosophic mind. A high degree of education must be attained before the notion of annihilation can be apprehended. The mind receives positive impressions only, and intelligentially conceives negatives by eliminating positive impressions. Night is regarded as the absence of day, death as the absence of life. In order to form an idea of the destruction of the conscious self, an amount of exhaustion of impressions is required wholly beyond the powers of an uncultivated mind. Man's personality is so distinctly projected on the surface of his consciousness, that the idea of its obliteration is inconceivable without doing violence to his primary convictions.

Let any one try to imagine himself extinguished,—his

¹ Brinton: *Myths of New World*, p. 234; New York, 1868.

² D'Urville: *Voyages*, i. 399.

powers of thought, his feelings, his volitions, his perceptions broken short off,—and he will see how extremely difficult is the task, and how incomplete is his success.

The phenomenon of death is the cessation of the action of the will in such a manner as to be cognizable. But to argue from such premises that the existence of the will is at an end is illogical. It has ceased to act in one way; that is all that can be said. The savage *A* has a rooted conviction that *B*'s actions are determined by an inner force. *B* dies. *A* observes that *B* no longer eats and walks, hunts and fights. Unless *A* be a metaphysician, his conviction in the persistence in the life of the soul of *B* is not disturbed; he simply concludes that the soul of *B* is operating in a way hitherto unusual. To suppose that the soul-force is extinct is to infer that, because one set of modes of operation has ceased, the force is incapacitated from operating according to another set of modes. It is far easier for *A* to allow his conception of the positive existence of *B* to remain undisturbed, than to distress his mind by thinking of *B* as an aggregation of negative ideas.

The popular belief in apparitions illustrates this truth. In most cases of ghost-seeing, the dead are beheld dressed in the clothes they wore during life, and are engaged in a customary pursuit. These supposed apparitions, of which one hears well-authenticated stories every day, prove that minds continue to represent the dead as existing in the same way as in past times. Most persons experience a difficulty in realizing a startling event, such as the death of a relative. To realize is to see a fact in all its bearings, and these, in the case of death, are of a negative description; such as "*A*, who has hitherto sat in this chair, will occupy it no more. He will not take a walk after break-

fast, nor read his newspaper, nor smoke his pipe," and so on. When spectres are said to have been seen, it is evident that the seer is of sluggish intellect; and, as a matter of fact, it will be found on examination that ghost-seers are not imaginative, but prosaic personages. The more imaginative a person is, the more able he is to perceive the bearings of a fact, and the less likely he is to be deluded by fancy.

Another cause of the wide-spread belief in the immortality of the soul is the want of discrimination between objective and ideal existence. When a man dies, the remembrance of him survives. To those who knew him he is not annihilated, because they are able to remember or re-present him ideally. The dead man produces no longer material impressions, but his personality survives in the remembrance of his friends. The savage is unable to distinguish between an idea and an object, an imagination and a reality, a dream and a fact. The inhabitants of Madagascar believe that every apparition seen in a dream has a substantial existence. When a European dreams of his distant country, the Dayaks think his soul has annihilated space, and paid a flying visit to Europe during the night. "Whoso seeth me in his sleep," said Mahommed, "seeth me truly." The Basutos, when they dream of a deceased relative, believe that he has really visited them; and they sacrifice a victim on his grave, thinking that he must be hungry. "Whiles I think my puir bairn's dead," said Madge Wildfire, "ye ken very weel it's buried—but that signifies naething. I have had it on my knee a hundred times, and a hundred till that, since it was buried; and how could that be were it dead, ye ken?—it's merely impossible."

Those whom education has taught to discriminate between fact and fancy know that the re-presentation is merely ideal; but this the rude intellect does not know, and it regards it as a tangible reality.

Man, as has been justly remarked by Feuerbach,¹ is led to believe in immortality by the instinct of self-conservation. He cannot endure the idea of letting that which he possesses escape his hands; what he has, he desires to have for ever. "We cannot," said Fichte, "love any object which we do not regard as eternal." This is true, for we will not undertake the execution of any task unless we are assured that it will last. Who would build a house if he knew that to-morrow it would fall? If I regard the possibility as a probability, I lose all desire of building. The idea of eternity is an idea of vague continuance. I build a house, hoping that it will last, and I do not care to think when it will fall; I do not attempt to fix a date at which it will fall. My idea of its lasting is indefinite. So the idea of the savage concerning the continued vitality of his friend's soul is that it will last on, and on, and on; and it is no concern of his when that indefinite duration will be cut short. The Fiji Islanders are said to believe that the soul of the dead man passes through two stages or conditions of existence, one of happiness, the next of misery; and that then it undergoes annihilation.² This, however, is nothing more than a supposition that the soul is born at death into a life of vigour, which passes into age, and ends in a second death, beyond which the Fiji mind does not attempt to follow it.

¹ Gedanken über Tod u. Unsterblichkeit; Leipz. 1849.

² United States Exploring Expedition, Report of Hales, p. 54; Philadelphia, 1846.

There are potent reasons to induce man to cling tenaciously to the belief in the immortality of the soul.

The instinctive clinging to life is essential to organic life; it is especially pronounced in man, exhibiting itself in intense repugnance to death. Death fills him with craven fear: it is to him the worst of ills, the most appalling catastrophe that can take place; and if some make a display of indifference at its approach, it is not that they are insensible to dread, but that they desire to exhibit the highest courage by facing unflinchingly that for which they feel the extremest terror.

Any idea which can alleviate this dread, and lighten, though with the feeblest glimmer, the awful blackness of uncertainty beyond the tomb, has been seized on with eagerness and clung to with desperation. The definiteness of Christian teaching on this point conduced greatly to its acceptance. When the missionaries of the Cross preached before King Edwin, an old chief rose and said: "O king, as we sit by night round the fire in the hall, and make good cheer, it often happens that a little bird flies for a moment into the light and heat; it comes out of the cold and darkness, and then it goes out into the cold and darkness; but none knew whence it comes, and none can tell whither it goes. And so is our own life. We come, and our wise men cannot tell us whence; we go, and they cannot tell us whither. Therefore, if there be any who can give us certainty about a future state, in God's name let us hear them."¹

A second reason for the adoption of a belief in the immortality of the soul is that such a doctrine can alone reconcile the anomalies of life. This is not a reason to

¹ Bede : *Eecl. Hist.* ii. 13.

influence a savage, but it is a powerful one in the breast of a man of thought and feeling. He sees the lots of men unequally balanced; misery, wrong, oppression, blot the history of the past, and smear that of the present. Patriots groan in dungeons. Civilization enriches one, and pauperizes a score. Juggernaut's car rolls over the necks of thousands. "Abel's blood cries out of the ground," writes Theodore Parker, "but there is no ear of justice to hear it; and Cain, red with slaughter, goes off welcomed to the arms of the daughters of Nod; the victims of nobleness rot in their blood; booty and beauty are both for him. The world festers with the wounds of the hero; but there is no cure for them: the hero is a fool—his wounds prove it. Saint Catherine has her wheel, Saint Andrew his sword, Saint Sebastian his arrow, Saint Lawrence his fire of green wood; Paul has his fastings, his watchings, his scourge, and his jail, his perils of waters, of robbers, of the city and the wilderness, his perils among false brethren, and Jesus His thorny crown, His malefactor's death; Kossuth gets his hard fate, and Francis the Stupid sits on the Hungarian throne;—Austrian, Hungarian, German, French, Italian dungeons are crowded with the noblest men of the age, who do perpetual penance for their self-denial, their wisdom, their justice, their affection for mankind, and their fidelity to God. These die as the fool dieth. There is no hope for any one of them in a body without a soul in an earth without a heaven, in a world without a God."¹

The belief, the hope, that there is a future in which the wrongs of suffering humanity will be righted, has been ploughed into the conscience of mankind by the oppression of centuries. But that men held a doctrine of future retribution for wrong-doing they would have sunk into

¹ Works, vol. xi. p. 15; London, 1867.

despair. Theodosius ordered the slaughter of the population of a city because his statues had been defaced. Adonibezek cut off the thumbs and great toes of threescore and ten kings, and made them gather crumbs under his table; Justinian blinded the saviour of his throne. The King of Dahomey sips sugar and water whilst a hundred human beings are being massacred before his eyes, and their blood is being puddled with the blood of tigers. History paints oppression whirling its bloody lash after man, and man in the madness of his despair, flying like Orestes to the temple of God, and there sitting as a suppliant, sullen and resolute :—

“Here will I keep my station and await the event of judgment.”¹

Without a belief in God, the avenger of all such as call upon Him, and a future life, in which the wicked should cease from troubling and be troubled himself in turn, man, the most down-trodden of all creatures, would wrap his mantle about his face, creep like a wounded hare into a corner, and sob to death.

The belief in a just God, and in a future state in which wrongs will be redressed, has been forced into prominence to restrain despotism. Even with such a belief the earth is full of violence, but without it she would brim over. Take away the idea of responsibility, and the fear of future retribution, and the veriest King Log will become a King Stork.

A belief in a future of rewards and punishments has thus been a natural escape for man groaning under despotism. Under the most stinging wrongs, he will and must hope, and hoping believe, that somewhere there is One above the wrong-doer, and that at some time He will

¹ *Æsch.* : *Furies*, 240.

recompense the wrong done. When oppression is most intolerable the conviction of a future of retributive justice is mostly lively, but when prosperity smiles it is almost forgotten. When absolute monarchy or feudal despotism racked men wantonly, men trusted that hereafter the king and the noble would writhe in the agonies they inflicted on their subjects. When the power of the crown and of the coronet is assumed by Justice, men hope that there is no future of suffering, or believe that it is easily evaded. Thus in the times when Roman despotism had reached its acme, men burst away from the slavery popularly called citizenship, and realizing with an awful intensity the justice of God, which they imprecated on the tyrants, they fasted and tortured their bodies in dens and caves of the earth, that they might satisfy during life that Divine justice which they believed would as surely exact satisfaction for their offences, as it would wreak vengeance on the oppressor for his crimes. If we turn to later ages, when political wrongdoing is less in amount, or affects individuals less perceptibly, we find that the sense of Divine justice and the belief in future retribution fade from the religious horizon, and that faith is taught to justify and ensure a heaven, even without repentance.

The doctrine of the immortality of the soul has taken shape in different forms. Of these the prominent are—I. degeneration; II. continuous life, unruled; III. metempsychosis; IV. cyclical life; V. development. These systems are not, however, clearly defined; they are found to interpenetrate one another. This, indeed, is rendered necessary by the fact that each man forms his own idea of immortality, even with a revelation to give some shape to his idea; and that the religious belief of a tribe or nation

is the fusion of a multitude of individual beliefs, out of which all the exceptional theories drop, and in which all the general ideas gather consistency.

I. The doctrine of degeneration is that, as the bodily and mental faculties decay with old age, so is the future life one of gradual loss of power, terminating in extinction. Such a theory lies at the root of those terrible customs of murdering the sick, and those who approach old age, and also of those schemes of future life of later development in which there is a Valhalla for those who die able-bodied, and a hell for those who die on the bed of sickness. The Vitians of Fiji argue that the condition after death is identical in every way with that in which man dies, during a long period, and that death arrests age and decay for a while, but that after a period they reassert their power, and drag the disembodied soul into a spiritual death. On this theory the Fiji islanders destroy their relatives and friends, and even themselves, long before the natural close of existence, in the hope of thus escaping the dishonour of entering the world of spirits in a condition of decrepitude. So rife, indeed, has grown the practice of strangulation or of burying men alive from a real wish to benefit the person immolated, that only a single instance of natural death came under the observation of Europeans during a protracted stay in one of these islands.

II. The idea of the future life being precisely like that of the present is far more common. Throughout the world at this day, and among civilized races in past ages, the notion has been prevalent that the dead live on disembodied, with all the passions, caprices, and contradictions of mortality, with no future open to them save that of continued being, with capabilities of wreaking vengeance on those who incur their wrath, and dependent on the living for the means

of subsistence and enjoyment in the spirit realm. "When the mingkieu (a musical instrument of stone) is played, and the lyre and guitar are struck and accompanied with songs," said an ancient Chinese writer, "grandfather and father come up to listen."¹ The Chinaman feeds and dresses his ancestors, who are supposed to be wholly dependent for subsistence on the gratuities of their descendants. The departed are addressed in prayer as counsellors of the living, and are gratified by presents, and bribed to interest themselves in the affairs of their children. "We bring fat cattle and sheep to the sacrifice. Prayer and the oblation are made at the gate. The sacrifice is completed, and our ancestor appears. He takes the offering. Pious descendants have luck. The kettle is heated in haste. Some roast, some bake flesh, and offer to the guest, then to the host. The wine is poured out. The patron spirit is present. The pious offerings smell. The meat and drink gratify the spirit. The spirit has satisfied himself with the wine."² At the present day relatives transmit money to their indigent parents by burning in the sacrificial fire strips of gilt paper, and supply them with suitable garments by delineating them on paper, and passing them through the flame into the soul-world.

The placing of clothing, utensils of cooking, and implements of war with the dead was the custom of our European ancestors, and is that of the American Indians at the present day. Sometimes the dog or horse, the slaves or the wife of the deceased, were slain to accompany the dead to the shadow realm, and attend on his comforts there. Among the Natchez Indians of the Lower Mississippi, when

¹ Schu-King Cap Y-tsi, i. 5, p. 38.

² Shi-King Siao-yà Tsu-tseu, ii. 6, 5, in Plath: *Die Religion u. der Cultus d. alten Chinesen*, ii. 121; München, 1863.

a chief died some of his wives and his most distinguished officers were knocked on the head and buried with him.¹ The Indians light a fire on the grave of the deceased, and maintain it for several days, to light him on his road. The ancient Icelanders put shoes on the feet of the dead, that they might not be footsore in making their journey. Combs and mirrors have been found in ancient tombs—proofs that their fair occupants were expected to be as greatly addicted to vanity in the spirit world as in that of the flesh. “That there are logical contradictions in this belief and in these ceremonies, that the fire is always in the same spot, that the weapons and utensils are not carried away by the departed, and that the food placed for his sustenance remains untouched, is very true. But those who would therefore argue that they were not intended for the benefit of the soul, and seek some recondite meaning in them as unconscious emblems of struggling faith, or expressions of inward emotions, are led astray by the very simplicity of their real intention. Where is the faith, where the science, that does not involve logical contradictions just as gross as these? They are tolerable to us merely because we are used to them. What value has the evidence of the senses anywhere against a religious faith? None whatever. A stumbling-block though this be to the materialist, it is the universal truth, and as such it is well to accept it as an experimental fact.”²

III. The soul was also supposed by some to pass after death into some other body. This doctrine is based on the consciousness of gradation between beasts and men; the boundaries of instinct and reason are too dimly traced to be at once and by all perceived. The human soul, with its

¹ Dupratz : *History of Louisiana*, ii. 219.

² Brinton : *Myths of New World*, p. 241 ; New York, 1868.

consciousness of infinity, seemed to be something already perfected in a pre-existing state, something which had gone through a succession of phases of existence, and which would undergo a further succession. In the dream of metempsychosis we may trace the yearnings and gropings of the soul after the source whence it has derived its consciousness, counting its dreams and hallucinations as gleams of memory, reflecting acts which had taken place in a former state of being. After death, the translation of the soul was supposed to continue. It passed into another man, or it was degraded to animate a brute. Philosophy, when brought to bear on transmigration, placed its extreme development in absorption into the deity. Thus Empedocles taught that he had been, in a former condition, shrub, bird, fish, and maiden; and that after death noble souls pass into the bodies of the higher animals, such as the lion; and that after a series of migrations, through the stages of poets, physicians, and princes, they become at last gods in a blissful sphere of perennial youth.¹ Plato held that there were ten migrations for the soul, each of a thousand years, after which it returned to an incorporeal existence in God, and to the pure contemplation of Him and the divine ideas.²

The Brahmanic doctrine is similar. The human soul is held to be indestructible, and death to be the passage of the spirit from one body to another. It may animate the lowest or the highest of the species of organic life. Beings rise by a succession of births from the lowest organized masses to the highest intelligence. After having reached the human body, a trial begins which determines its future destiny. It may mount directly to the region of gods, or sink into the lower forms of existence. But if it ascend, it is not to a permanent abode of peace, but to rest there for

¹ Emped. v. 16, *sqq.*

² Republic, x. 615.

a space, and then to plunge once more to the bottom of animate life, and to rise slowly and painfully again through the scale of creatures. Buddha sought to escape this terrible fatality, to cut short this perpetual gyration. Death, according to the Hindu belief, was but a passage from one into some other phase of misery, on the edge of which loomed the black cloud of another death, and a future plunge into the abyss of being. To dissipate this terrible prospect, Buddha taught that by entire disengagement of the mind from all material objects, and of the affections from all human subjects, the soul could annihilate itself. By contemplation this condition is reached. In contemplation there are four degrees:—1. The internal happiness arising from a sense of disengagement from the sensual world. In this condition reason and judgment remain, so that the postulant can distinguish and choose between what is conducive to his final state and what draws him from it. 2. In the second stage judgment and reason fail, and the intellect remains centred on Nirvána, the ultimate state to which the ascetic desires to attain. 3. At the third degree, all sense of satisfaction disappears, and indifference supervenes, but withal there remain a confused self-consciousness. 4. At the fourth stage all consciousness dies out, memory has vanished, desire is atrophied, and absolute apathy characterizes the state which is as near Nirvána as man can reach in his present life.

IV. Of the theory that souls pass through cycles of existence, little more need be said. It has never been a popular theory, and has only been embraced by a few philosophers, and adopted into the Brahmanic psychology alone. Heraclitus among the Greeks seems to have held a doctrine of this nature, for he taught that spirits were

whirled through a succession of existences, of which there was no end.

V. The fifth and noblest theory is, that the soul after death passes into another sphere, in which, if it has deserved well, it enjoys that perfection which was unattainable when united to the body; or if it has deserved ill, it undergoes suffering. This is the scheme of immortality held by peoples which have reached a high state of civilization. "Awake, awake!" was the address of a Mexican to a dying person; "already the morning breaks on you, and now the light is dawning. Already the yellow-plumed birds are singing to greet you; already the gorgeous butterflies flutter about you."¹ "One knows not," said Socrates, "whether death be not the greatest of all blessings to man."² And Euripides puts the sentiment into the mouth of Theseus, "From whence each particle entered the body, thither has it gone—the spirit indeed to the sky, and the body to the earth."³

The opinion of a perfecting of the soul after death has undergone several modifications. One view is, that all souls pass into a condition of happiness; another is, that the souls of those who have committed certain crimes are purged of their sin before they enter into happiness. A third tenet is, that death irrevocably fixes the condition of the soul in a state of bliss or of woe. A fourth tenet is, that the soul is imperfect without the body, and that it rests till the end of the world, when it will be reunited to the body, and that the body will be raised glorious or loathsome, according as the soul is destined to bliss or woe.

The first of these conjectures is that formed by certain savage nations, and is found to co-exist with a low moral

¹ Sahagun: *Hist. de la N. España*, x. 29.

² Plato: *Apol. Socrat.*

³ Eurip. *Suppliants*, v. 534.

consciousness, and with rudimentary political organization. Where there is little restraint on personal freedom, there is small sense of moral responsibility, and few acts are admitted to be criminal; consequently, every man is respectable enough to merit future happiness. As the sense of responsibility forms, and the idea of morality acquires precision, men adopt views of eternal happiness which would be incompatible with the admission into it of all men without some purgation to rid them of offensive habits, disorderly passions, evil humours, which would make eternity an endless scene of irritations and quarrels. The third view is that life is the time of probation, and that the eternal condition is fixed by man's conduct during life. This theory leads to the somewhat startling consequence that endless punishments are exacted for crimes committed, possibly, without premeditation. The last theory, that of the resurrection of the body and its union with a purified soul, is peculiarly Christian.

The doctrine of the immortality of the soul has exercised a tremendous influence, not only in leading man towards civilization, but also in restraining him from advance. That it should have an elevating tendency is obvious, but that it should have a degrading tendency is not so clear. The reason of this latter influence is, that upon this doctrine has been erected a vast superstructure of angelology and demonology.

There are several theories to account for angels and devils, but, among a vast number of nations, the angels are the souls of the good, and the devils are those of the bad. A modern writer who has deeply studied the savage races of man observes: "Their religions have not acted as levers to raise them into civilization, but have rather worked, and

that powerfully, to impede every step in advance; in the first place, by ascribing everything unintelligible in nature to spiritual agency, and then, by making the fate of man dependent on mysterious and capricious forces, not on his own skill and foresight.”¹

This is perfectly true, because these religions have been steeped in spirit-worship, and saturated with sorcery, which is the conjuration of spirits.

Necromancy is the shadow of religion. The priest was the philosopher of the early religions. The sorcerer sought to stamp out speculation. Religion pointed to an ideal, but the only ideal of which witchcraft knew was an ideal of horror. Thus, instinctively, religion and sorcery, the worship of good and the conjuration of evil, became antagonistic. The Jewish law forbade witch and sorcerer to live. The Norseman drew a sack over the head of the dealer with familiar spirits, and precipitated him from a cliff. The twelve tables denounced the Roman *saga*; the adorer of *divs*, or demons, was accursed by the Mazdæan, and S. Paul warned the early Christians against “the worshipping of spirits” and “the doctrines of demons.”

The belief in demons is but another form of the belief in the disembodied spirits of the departed. At a time when every man's hand was against his fellow, the characteristic of the human soul was cunning, cruelty, and envy. Souls, when freed from the body, were supposed to retain their cunning, cruelty, and envy. The ancestral souls of the King of Dahomey shake the earth because the old customs of steeping the soil in human gore are not kept up. The Arkansas Indians burn lodge and all its contents over a corpse, in their dread of its malice. The Algonquins carry it forth by a hole cut opposite the door, and beat the walls

¹ Waitz : *Anthropologie des Naturvölker*, i. 459.

with sticks to frighten away the lingering ghost. Burying-places were always avoided with fear. The Scandinavians believed that the dead fattened in their cairns on the blood of those they nightly slew. I quote from a recent work on Bulgaria an example of the mode in which the spirit of the dead becomes transformed in popular belief into a demon ;¹ —“ When a man who has vampire blood in his veins (for this condition is not only epidemic and endemic, but hereditary), or who is otherwise predisposed to become a vampire, dies, nine days after his burial he returns to upper earth in an æriform shape. The presence of the vampire in this his first condition may be easily discerned in the dark by a succession of sparks like those from a flint and steel—in the light, by a shadow projected upon a wall, and varying in density according to the age of the vampire in his career. In this stage he is comparatively harmless, and is only able to play the practical jokes of the German Kobold and Gnome, of the Irish Phooka, or the English Puck ; he roars in a terrible voice, or amuses himself by calling out the inhabitants of a cottage by the most endearing terms and then beating them black and blue. The father of our servant Theodore was a vampire of this class. One night he seized by the waist (for vampires are capable of exercising considerable physical force) Kodja Keraz, the *Pehlivan*, or champion wrestler of Derekuoi, crying out, ‘ Now then, old Cherry-tree, see if you can throw me.’ The village champion put forth all his strength, but the vampire was so heavy that Kodja Keraz broke his own jaw in throwing the invisible being who was crushing him to death. At the time of this occurrence, five years ago, our village was so infested by vampires that the inhab-

¹ “ Residence in Bulgaria,” by Captain S. Clair and Charles Brophy ; London, 1869.

itants were forced to assemble together in two or three houses, to burn candles all night, and to watch by turns in order to avoid the assaults of the Obours, who lit up the streets with their sparkles, and of whom the most enterprising threw their shadow on the walls of the room where the peasants were dying of fear; whilst others howled, shrieked, and swore outside the door, entered the abandoned houses, spat blood into the floor, turned everything topsy-turvy, and smeared the whole place, even the pictures of the saints, with cow-dung."

But when the homicidal mania which infects savages subsided, these malevolent spirits were classed apart from human souls, which were not now always supposed to raven for slaughter, and thus the human spirits of their ancestry came to be regarded as a distinct species of spirits, *i.e.* demons. Man regarded himself as living in the midst of an invisible world of spiritual beings, by whom he was influenced, and his destiny was swayed. These beings he regarded as controlling the elements, and disturbing the flow of natural law. They had to be conjured not to injure, or warded off with amulets. The conjuration of fiends and the fabrication of amulets became the occupation of a class. And thus arose the necromancer and witch. The necromancer and the witch were the hierophants of evil, as the priest and the vestal were the celebrants of good. Hulda was prophetess in the temple, and in Endor lurked a witch. The priest sacrificed to God, the magician immolated to Satan. The fears of the ignorant created this order of spirit-conjurers. He dared not face the darkness which his terror had peopled with hideous shapes. Fancy made him believe that the dead arose from their graves and prowled about, thirsty for blood; that they swept the plains in the shape of wolves, with lupine rage and lust; that they wavered as

sheeted ghosts in the gloom of the forest; that they danced on the moonlit turf; jabbered at his window, shrieked in at his door, squatted on his breast at night. Every Christian churchyard, every American bone-mound, every Siberian tumulus, every Hindu place of burning, every Egyptian tomb, is haunted by spectres. Man lives in perpetual dread of their power. The sun sets, and he flies to his home, and shuts himself within and bars his fears out. If he is obliged to stir abroad in the night, he treads stealthily with the utmost circumspection, and with ear on the alert. He mutters incantations, clasps amulets, starts at the rustle of the leaves, and shivers at the growl of a beast. He is a ready prey to the schaman, the enchanter, or the witch, whom his fears have summoned to his aid. Sir Walter Scott deduces demonology from the same origin: "The general, or, it may be termed, the universal belief of the inhabitants of the earth in the existence of spirits separated from the encumbrance and incapacities of the body, is grounded on the consciousness of the divinity that speaks in our own bosoms, and demonstrates to all men, except the few who are hardened to the celestial voice, that there is within us a portion of the divine substance, which is not subject to the law of death and dissolution, but which, where the body is no longer fit for its abode, shall seek its own place, as a sentinel dismissed from his post. Unaided by revelation, it cannot be hoped that mere earthly reason should be able to form any rational or precise conjecture concerning the destination of the soul when parted from the body; but the conviction that such an indestructible essence exists, the belief expressed by the poet in a different sense, *non omnis moriar*, must infer the existence of many millions of spirits, who have not been annihilated, though they have become invisible to mortals, who still see,

hear, and perceive only by means of the imperfect organs of humanity. Probability may lead some of the most reflecting to anticipate a state of future rewards and punishments; as those experienced in the education of the deaf and dumb find that their pupils, even while cut off from all instruction by ordinary means, have been able to form, out of their own unassisted conjectures, some ideas of the existence of a Deity, and of the distinction between the soul and the body—a circumstance which proves how naturally these truths arise in the human mind. The principle that they do so arise, being taught or communicated, leads to farther conclusions.”¹

¹ *Demonology and Witchcraft*, p. 3; 2d Edit. 1831.

CHAPTER V

THE NAMES OF GOD

Advantage of comparative philology—Root ideas and root words—Soul names—Relation observed between wind, breath, smoke, and the soul—Roots expressive of force—Names of God expressive of force—Titles of pre-eminence—Attributive names—Names derived from localization—The multiplicity of Divine names—Avoidance of using names—Semitic language a protest against polytheism—Instance of attributes becoming distinct deities.

THE idea of God having been conceived, it became necessary for man to find a name which should express his apprehension of the Deity.

We have seen that the perception of a self-generating force in the human will originated the conception of God. It is, therefore, probable that the primitive names of God should bear some analogy to those which designate our personality.

Language and ideas are intimately connected, both in their origin, in their progress, and in their decay; and the analysis of names will often lead us to the root ideas which produced them. Through the rich and tangled jungle of polytheism, comparative philology is the most reliable guide; and in monotheism also it enables us to pierce at once to the root of the God-idea. Primary perceptions are not, however, always represented by root words, for rudi-

mentary intuitions are just those which are the last to need indication.

Our ideas can all be traced back to certain radicals, limited in number; and it is the same with words. The large vocabulary at our command can be reduced to a fixed number of root sounds, with fixed ideas attached to them. As ideas enlarge and interpenetrate and diverge, language is modified and moulded to express the new and changing ideas. The glossary of a people is a measure of their thoughts. The English rustic is said to have only some three hundred words at his command; this is because he has but three hundred ideas. The Australian savage has no word for tree, because he has not arrived at a generalizing stage of intellectual progress. He has a name for the eucalyptus, and a name for the cocoa-nut, but has no generic title including both.

A name designating existence will be the nearest approach to a rudimentary conception of the Deity; and, as a conception of His existence is a deduction from the consciousness of man's own existence, we expect to find the highest and most monotheistic names of God related to the names descriptive of our own conscious principle. Accordingly, before we deal with the Divine names we must examine the soul names.

In many instances the terms used to designate the seat of life and perception are derived from a secondary and analogical idea. The soul is the energizing principle, and breath is life, or conterminous with life. When life ceases, breath ceases, and *vice versâ*. The connexion observed to exist between them supplied man with a name for the soul, when it became necessary for him to express in words the idea of his existence, apart from his body. Such a stock of soul words as *ψυχή*, *πνεῦμα*, *ruah*, *animus*, *ghost*,

exhibit a rude condition of mind when they were formed, ready to give names on the most superficial analogies, without troubling to penetrate into the depths of the personality in quest of a true basis on which to raise a fabric of psychic terminology. The analogy between soul and breath was so plain that it was at once concluded that they were identical, or, if not identical, were very similar. $\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$ is breath or soul, from a root expressive of blowing, a root that reappears in $\psi\upsilon\gamma\mu\acute{o}s$, drying, the effect of a blast of wind, and in $\psi\upsilon\gamma\mu\acute{o}s$, another effect, cold. From the same radical was derived $\pi\upsilon\epsilon\acute{\iota}\omega$, to blow, and $\pi\upsilon\epsilon\hat{\upsilon}\mu\alpha$. The Hebrew *ruah* has at one time the signification of wind, at another of life, or soul. The Latin *animus*, *anima*, were originally identical; “*animus est, quo sapimus, anima, qua vivimus*,”¹ is a later refinement. The root *an* signifies to breathe, whence the Sanskrit *anilá*, wind, and *prána*, spirit, the Greek *ἀνεμος*, the Irish *anal*, breath, and *anam*, life or soul.

Spirit is from a root *sv=sp* with a similar meaning, and onomatopoetic, a sound imitative of that produced by breathing. Thence the Sanskrit *svas*, and the Latin *spiro*, *spiritus*, &c.

The Teutonic *gheist*, our *ghost*, is from a root signifying to blow with violence, which reappears in *gust*, and in the Icelandic *geysir*, and in the Scandinavian verb *gjösa*, to pour forth.

In the primitive tongues of America, a similar identification of soul and breath, spirit and wind, appears. In the Dakota language *niya* is literally breath, figuratively life; in Netela, *piuts* is breath and soul; *silla* in Esquimo means air, and also the reasoning faculty. In the Yakama tongue of Oregon *wkrisha* expresses wind, and *wkrishwit*,

¹ Nonius Marcel. 426, 427.

life; with the Aztecs *hecatl* had the meaning of wind, of soul and of life; and in Mohawk, *atonritz*, the soul, is derived from *atonrion*, to breathe.¹

Yet, though the relationship of words expressing soul and breath point to a confusion of ideas touching the life and the breath, yet, in all cases, the name for soul is not derived from the word for breath, but from a root expressive of force common to both. Thus, in Slavonic each branch idea is distinct. The radical is *du*; thence have been derived *dounon*, to breathe, and *dyma*, the seat of force, the mind. From *dounon* is derived *duim*, smoke, because the breath has a vaporous appearance; but *dyma* is not derived from *dounon*, but from the root.

The Greek *θυμός* did not primitively signify breath; its root is *θυ*, equivalent to the Sanskrit *dū*, and has the meaning of setting in motion; *θυμός* is therefore the motive force in man, acting now in thought, now in the operation of breathing. The word was early applied to breath, however, for it has become the parent of a host of words significative of vapour; Sanskrit *d m*, Lithuanian *dūmai*, Slavonic *duim*, Irish *dluimh*, Latin *fumus*, Old German *daum*.

The relation borne by the breath to steam or smoke caused the soul to be regarded as a vapour. Thus, in the metaphysical Arabic romance of Yokdhan, the hero seeks the source of life and thought with the anatomist's scalpel, and discovers in one of the cavities of the heart a bluish vapour, which was the living soul.²

It was also thought that the soul was a flame, and that the extinction of the "vital spark" was death. But a more common notion was that it was a shadow, hence the

¹ Brinton : Myths of New World, p. 50.

² Ebn Tophail : Hai Ebn Yokdhan ; ed. Pocceck, 1671.

manes of the Romans. "Pulvis et umbra sumus," said Horace.¹ The negroes also suppose the shadow to be the soul, and the New England tribes call the soul *chemung*, and the Quiches *natub*, both of which mean the shadow.

If we examine a few roots expressive of force, we shall see developed from them, not precisely what is regarded by us as the soul, but terms expressive of personality. There are several Sanskrit rudimentary words, *ih*, *âtm*, *âsu*, having so close a resemblance in signification that it is possible they may have arisen from the same lost radical. We cannot deduce *ih* from *âtm*, but we suspect that they are sprung from one parent. *Ih* signifies to desire, to seek, to crave after; thence *ihâ*, desire, appetite. The desire predicates a violent principle. The same root represents will consenting in our English *yes*, and in the German *yah*; but in the Norse *ei* it has the meaning of either yes or no—showing that originally it was a mere expression of the will. *Âtm* appears in the Sanskrit *âtman*, the self, in the Irish *adh*, thought, and *amhne*, himself; and very certainly in the German *athem*, breath. In this instance the idea of the conscious self is not taken from the breath. Out of the same root are moulded *I*, *ich*, *ek*, *ἐγώ*, expressive of the volent self.

The application of the idea of this conscious self to the Cause of nature took place in Vaidic times. "Atman (self) is the Lord of all things, self is the king of all things. Brâhman (force) itself is but Atman (self)."¹ This is precisely what has been laid down as the basis of Theism. In Vaidic mythology Atman, however, never solidified into a more tangible conception, though Brâhman became one

¹ Horace : Od. iv. 7. 16.

² Brihad-âranjaka, ed. Roer, p. 478 ; quoted by Max Müller : "Chips from a German Workshop," i. 70

in a trilogy, and rapidly involved himself in a cloud of fable.

In Iranian theology, Ahura is the supreme God. The cognate Sanskrit word is Asura. The root of Ahura and Asura is *asu*, the thought, or the breath. The Asuras are the Æsir of the Scandinavians. The original conception of *as* was the living, breathing, thinking cause; but the reminiscence which was preserved in Iranian mythology was lost in a family of demigods among the Norsemen, and was abased to a tribe of demons among the Hindus. Although the first conception of the Æsir as intelligent forces faded completely from the unphilosophic minds of the Norsemen, the presence of the Vanir opposed to them in their traditions should have acted as a reminder of the original idea. For as the Æsir represent active force, the Vanir derive their name from an absence, want, emptiness, which shows them to have been mere negatives. The Sanskrit *van* is to kill, or bring to nought; in Erse *bana* is death, a state of nothingness. Want and vanity are derived from the same root.

If we look for the names of God derived from analogues of our breath, we find them in great abundance. Sometimes the name for God and that for wind are identical. Where we read, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth,"¹ the Vulgate renders the passage, "The Spirit breathes where He wills, and thou hearest His voice, but thou knowest not whence He cometh, and whither He goeth." In the Mosaic account of Creation the *Ruah*, Spirit of God, moves upon the face of the waters;² which the Targum of Onkelos paraphrases, "And a wind

¹ John iii. 8.

² Gen. i. 2.

from before the Lord blew upon the face of the waters.”¹ The Creek Indians call their chief deity Esaugetah Emissee, the master of breath or wind; and the Aztec god Yoallie-hecatl meant ‘the wind of night.’ Odin is ‘the raging gale,’ and derives his name from the preterite of the verb signifying ‘to rage.’

	Infin.	Preterite.	Whence the name
Icelandic . .	Vaða	Oð	Ódin.
Old High Dutch .	Watan	Wuot	Wuotan.
Old Saxon . .	Wadan	Wôd	Wôdan

Other names of God would be titles of pre-eminence. The monotheistic Jew called his God Adonai, Lord, and the Phœnician named him Adon. The Canaanitish Moloch, the Ammonitish Milcom, signified the King, like the Hebrew Malka; and Solomon was blind indeed to erect separate altars to Moloch and Milcom, whilst in the Temple he worshipped Malka. The Chaldean and Canaanite named God Bel or Baal, also the Lord; or Rimmon, and Ram, the Exalted One: just as the Chinese indicated the supremacy of the sky by the title of Shangti, the Great Khan.

The attributes of God would also be the sources of appellations. The idea of strength centred in Him would originate His name of Brâhma and El. That of splendour gave Him the name Div, whence the Sanskrit Dêvâ; the ancient Russ Dia, the Gothic Tuisco, the Gallic Tieu, the Erse Dia, the Greek Θεός, and the Latin Deus.

As He was considered to be the perfection of goodness, He was termed God, the Norse Guð, and the German Gott; as eternal, the Carib called Him the Ancient of Days.

¹ Targum of Onkelos, Genesis, by Etheridge, i. 35.

and the Phœnician Beltain, or the venerable Bel; and the Egyptian, Kneph.¹

As the mysterious one, He was called by the Egyptians Amoun; and as the revealer, Ptah.

That mysterious name of God found among the Sclavonic nations—the Russ Bog, the Tongu Buga or Bogdoi—seems to be derived from the root in Sanskrit *bāg*, which has the meaning of ‘to divide,’ and also ‘to worship;’ whence *bāga*, portion, felicity, and *bāg*, reverence. What its original significance was is not clear, nor why it became a divine name. Possibly it indicated God as the giver of good, the divider of lots. The same name exists among ourselves as that of evil spirits, Bogies and Bogarts, precisely as the name Deus with us has an evil signification as the Deuce. In the cuneiform inscriptions the sacred name of Baga appears; this is the Persian Bhaga, cognate to the Sanskrit *bāga*, good fortune, and the sun. As the generator of life, the name of Hermes (from ἕρμα) is given to the Deity; as Lord of heaven, the Quiche called God Ahraxatzel; as giver of life, Quaholon; as creator, Tzakol; and as Lord, Tepeu.

The localization of the Deity in heaven gave birth to a number of other names. From the first moment that the consciousness of a God rose upon man’s soul, like the morning sun, he lifted his head on high and sought him in the sky. That vast uplifted sphere, now radiant with light, now twinkling with countless stars; whether flooded with glory by the sun, or traversed by the moon, calm or ruffled,

¹ Plutarch: Isis and Osiris, ed. Parthey, c. xxi.: Καλοῦσιν αὐτοὶ Κνήφ, ἀγέννητον ὄντα καὶ ἀθάνατον.

² Plutarch: Isis and Osiris, ed. Parthey, c. ix.: “Ἐτι δὲ τῶν πολλῶν νομιζόντων ἴδιον παρ’ Αἰγυπτίοις ὄνομα τοῦ Διὸς εἶναι τὸν Ἄμουν, Μανηθῶς μὲν ὁ Σεβεννίτης τὸ κεκρυμμένον ὀλεται καὶ τὴν κρύψιν ὑπὸ ταύτης δηλοῦσθα τῆς φωνῆς.

so changing yet so enduring, vague, mysterious, unattainable, never wasting or waxing old, attracted the wonder of man, and in it he placed the home of his gods. Heaven was an upper world inhabited by deities. The Esth supposed it to be a blue tent, behind which Ukko the Ancient, and the sustainers of sun, moon, and stars, and the guardians of the clouds dwelt in splendour.¹ Men for a long time supposed that the earth was a flat plain surrounded by the sea, and that the sky was a roof on which the heavenly bodies travel, or from which they are suspended as lamps. "The Polynesians, who thought, like so many other peoples, ancient and modern, that the sky descended at the horizon and enclosed the earth, still call foreigners *papalangi*, or heaven-bursters, as having broken in from another world outside. The sky is to most savages what is called in a South American language *mumeseke*, that is, 'the earth-on-high.' There are holes or windows through this roof or firmament, where the rain comes through, and if you climb high enough you can get through and visit the dwellers above, who look, and talk, and live very much in the same way as the people upon earth. As above the flat earth, so below it, there are regions inhabited by men or man-like creatures, who sometimes come up to the surface, and sometimes are visited by the inhabitants of the upper earth. We live as it were upon the ground-floor of a great house, with upper storeys rising one over another above us, and cellars down below."²

The gods inhabiting this upper storey were called by the Latins *Dii Superi*, and by the Greeks *οἱ οὐράνιοι, οἱ ἄνω, οἱ ὑπατοί*, and by the American Indians, *Oki*, 'those above.' But if at one time the gods were supposed to

¹ Kalewipoeg, Rune xvi. 38—42.

² Tylor: *Early History of Mankind*, p. 349; London, 1865.

inhabit the sky, at another they were identified with the sky and its phenomena:—

“Adspice hoc sublime candens quem invocant omnes
Jovem;”¹

and moderns speak of Heaven's will, Heaven's purpose. The Chinese, before they settled into atheism, called the sky Thian, and compounded his hieroglyph of the character Ta, great, 大, and the sign for one —, thus representing heaven as the Great One.² The Finn named his god Jumala, which is the same as the Lapp Jubmel, the Tscherk Juma, and the Samojed Num; the name being an onomatopoetic designation of the thunder. They applied this name to the sky as the seat of thunder, and thus to the God whom they identified with the sky.³ The Araucanians designate God as “the soul of the sky,” and the Quiches name him “The Master of the Azure Surface.”

The North Pole, around which the constellations wheel, was regarded by some peoples as the especial seat of the Deity. The Chinese name, Tay-ye, signifying the Great Unity, has been by them applied to the North Star. The disciples of Lao-tse venerated the North, and regarded it as a sin to spit in that direction; and Confucius, on his return from Lou, fasted, and then, having purified himself, assembled his disciples before an old altar, and having laid on it the six kings, or books he had composed, he knelt down with his face turned north, to adore Heaven.⁴ Isaiah speaks of Lucifer in his opposition to the Most High establishing his throne in the sides of the North.⁵ The seven stars of the constellation Ursus major received special rev-

¹ Ennius, in Cic. de Nat. Deor. xxv.

² Plath: Cultus and Relig. p. 18. ³ Castrén: Finnische Mythe. p. 16.

⁴ Mémoires concernant les Chinois, xii. 379. ⁵ Isa. xiv. 13, 14.

erence and deification as wheeling around the North. They were the seven Rischis of India, and the seven Kudai of the Minussinian Tartars.

The multiplication of names for the Deity is due to several causes. To the principle of these we shall allude in the chapter on Polytheism. But there was a potent cause which must be mentioned here.

Words and ideas are so closely united, that men think there is some real bond of connexion between the thing and the name belonging to it; and among savages, it is popularly supposed that to mention the name of an object at a distance has a direct effect upon it. The name is held to be a part of the very being of man, so that by it his personality may be carried away and grafted elsewhere. A man may be cursed or bewitched through his name. The names of drugs written on slips of paper and swallowed by a patient are held to work as efficaciously as the medicines themselves.¹ "This confusion of objective with subjective connexion, which shows itself so uniform in principle, though so various in details," says Mr. Tylor, one of the shrewdest observers of the characteristics of savage thought, "in the practices upon images and names, done with a view of acting through them on their originals or their owners, may be applied to explain one branch after another of the arts of the sorcerer and diviner, till it almost seems as though we were coming near the end of his list, and might set down practices not based on this mental process as exceptions to a general rule. When a lock of hair is cut off as a memorial, the subjective connexion between it and its former owner is not severed. In the mind of the friend who treasures it up, it recalls thoughts of his presence, it is still something

¹ Davis : Chinese, ii. 215.

belonging to him. We know, however, that the objective connexion was cut by the scissors, and that what is done to that hair afterwards is not felt by the head on which it grew. But this is exactly what the savage has not come to know. He feels that the subjective bond is unbroken in his own mind, and he believes that the objective bond, which his mind never gets clearly separate from it, is unbroken too."¹ As with the hair, so with the name. Among the lower races a remarkable aversion is noticeable to the designation by name of a friend or relative, lest the use of the name should produce a bad effect on the person spoken of. Thus the Indians of British Columbia exhibit an extreme dislike to mention their names, lest these names should be employed to hurt them.² Among the Algonquins the real name is kept a profound secret, and the current designation is a mere nickname. It is next to impossible to induce an Indian to utter personal names; the utmost he will do, if a person implicated is present, is to move his lips, without speaking, in the direction of the personage.³

A Hindu wife will never, under any circumstances, mention the name of her husband; she will call him the Master, Swamy, &c., but will refrain carefully from giving his true name. The names of the dead are avoided with horror, lest the utterance of them should call up the ghost.

This is very general among all savage races. Dr. Lang tried to get the name of a relative who had been killed from an Australian. "He told me who the lad's father was, who was his brother, what he was like, how he walked

¹ Tylor : *Early History of Mankind*, p. 127.

² Mayne : *British Columbia*, p. 278 ; London, 1862.

³ Schoolcraft : *Historical and Statistic Information*, &c. part ii. pp 65, 433 ; Philadelphia, 1851.

when he was alive, how he held his tomahawk in his left hand instead of his right (for he was left-handed), and with whom he usually associated; but the dreaded name never escaped his lips; and I believe no promises or threats could have induced him to utter it."¹

The same dislike is felt to mention any spiritual beings, or anything to which supernatural powers are ascribed, not lest the naming of them should hurt them, but lest it should attract their attention to the speaker.

The Dyak will not speak of the small-pox by name, but will call it "the chief," or "jungle leaves." "Talk of the Devil, and he is sure to appear," is a familiar proverb among ourselves, indicative of the same feeling. Our countryfolk will not mention the fairies and pyxies except by some euphemism, as "the Good Folk." The Yezidis, who worship the Evil One, have a horror of his name being mentioned.

The Greeks called the Furies Eumenides, the gracious ones. The Mahommedan supposes that the name of God is known only to the prophets, and Allah is regarded by them as a mere title. So the Jew held that Jehovah had an incommunicable name; and in his legends told how Solomon, beginning to utter it, made heaven and earth quake. An aged Indian of Lake Michigan explained why tales of the spirits were only told in winter, by saying that when the deep snow is on the ground the voices of those repeating their names is muffled, but that in summer the slightest mention of them must be avoided lest the spirits should be offended.²

This dread of vexing the gods by mentioning their names has led to the formation of a multitude of attribu-

¹ Lang: Queensland, pp. 367, 387; London, 1861.

² Schoolcraft, part. iii. pp. 314, 492.

tive titles and epithets, which could be familiarly used. In course of time these titles became sacred names, and euphemisms had to be coined for common use that they, in turn, might be avoided.

The Semitic divine names bear indelibly on their front the stamp of their origin, and the language itself testifies against the insulation and abstraction of these names for polytheism. The Aryan's tongue bore no such testimony to him. The spirit of his language led him away from monotheism, whilst that of the Shemite was an ever-present monitor, directing him to a God, sole and undivided. "The glory of the Semitic race is this," says M. Renan, "that from its earliest days it grasped that notion of the Deity which all other peoples have had to adopt from its example, and on the faith of its declaration."¹ That it was so is, to a very great extent, owing to the construction of the language, which is such that its roots lie unaltered in every inflexion and combination, without undergoing the modifications which have, in the Aryan tongues, almost obliterated the root-form. "In the Semitic languages, the roots expressive of the predicates which were to serve as the proper names of any subjects, remained so distinct within the body of a word, that those who used the word were unable to forget its predicative meaning, and retained in most cases a distinct consciousness of its appellative power."² Consequently the reduction of Semitic words to their roots is infallible, whilst, on the other hand, the reduction of Aryan words to their roots is liable to error.

The difference in the two linguistic families greatly

¹ Renan : *Hist. Gén. des Langues Sémitiques*, i. 5.

² M. Müller : *Chips from a German Workshop*, i. 356.

affected their respective religions: whereas the structure of their words led the Shemites at once to the original signification of their divine names, the shifting character of the Aryan roots obliterated rapidly their primitive meanings. Thus there was a linguistic tendency among the Shemites to fix the theologic idea, and among the Aryans there was an opposite tendency to its obscuration. "I invoke," says the Yaçna, "I celebrate the Creator, Ahura-Mazda, luminous, resplendent, very great, very active, very intelligent, and very beautiful, eminent in purity, possessor of true knowledge, source of pleasures, Him who has created, who has moulded, who has nourished us."¹ Epithets such as these easily detached themselves from the Supreme Deity, and became the proper names of inferior gods, even in that Zarathustrian creed which almost touched the sublime conception of a sole cause, so that we find like qualities to these becoming Ameschaspendas: Vohumanô (from *vôhu*, Skr. *vasu*, good; and *manô*, Skr. *manas*, thought) benevolence; Craoshô (from *crush*, to hear) obedience; Quarenô glory; Ardvî-sûra (from *Ardvî*, Skr. *ridh*, high) the exalted. "These Ameschaspendas, kings just and generous, deliver us from all the Devas, and the ills they bring, and from the hostile army."² With the Aryan the significance of the old epithet was lost, and thus it became the name of a distinct god. But with the Shemite the significance was never lost. If his first conception of God was one of force, he called Him El; and ever after, into whatever combinations that root would enter, the idea of force would penetrate. If he conceived Him as a being, he would term Him Jah; and Jah would ever convey to Him the notion of divine existence. In the same way, a title of honour to Him remained but a title, and nothing save the

¹ Yaçna, ed. Spiegel, c. i. § 1.

² Vendidad, ii. 162.

irresistible passion for "gods many and lords many," which wrought so potently among the ancient races, could have blinded the eyes of the speakers of a Semitic language, so as to make them adore Baal, Milcom, and Rimmon, as distinct deities with different attributes. The worship addressed to each severally was like paying thrice the legitimate tribute to the monarch, because he had assumed to be called High, Exalted, Illustrious.

The pagan Shemite identified the active force in nature with the sun, and the passive force with the earth. Consequently he gave the sun the title of Baal and the earth that of Baaltis. But the sun has its variations of power and splendour, and these variations received special designations. By Serach was expressed the rising sun, by Baal-Chamman the blazing noon-day orb, by Adonis the sun alternating between summer and winter, life and death.

The original idea of God was vague, but it was more true than those countless vagaries of human thought which peopled heaven and earth with innumerable deities, and worshipped the same under different names. The fire of the conception of the Deity having kindled in the breast of man, exploded into terminology, coruscated in fable, and strewed the globe with sparks of truth and ashes of superstition.

CHAPTER VI

THE LAW OF RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT

Varieties of religious beliefs—The result of natural law—Same law prevails in physics, social life, and politics—Variety produced by simple means—Dynamics of religion—Belief progressive—Analogy of human embryo—The motor is a craving after truth—Constant flux in belief the result—Analogy of language—Accident causes rapid development or retardation of religious growth—Religion the synthesis of reason and sentiment—Dogma—Worship—Discipline—The statics of religion—The double tendency in all religions—Habit—Theocracies—Revelations—Benefits derived from arrest of too rapid development—Examples of counter currents—Example of stagnation.

THE world in all ages has teemed with religious beliefs of the most diverse forms of ceremonial expression, strongly contrasting in system and opposed in dogma.

Here the priest smears with human blood the idol which will be overthrown on the morrow by the missionary of another creed. The gods of one nation are the devils of their neighbours. Here priests sacrifice children in flames to a god, and there men shelter and feed orphans as a work acceptable to their deity. These transfix their flesh with skewers, those indulge their every lust, and both from a religious motive. One worships an ideal of beauty, another an ideal of ugliness. Jacob leans on his staff to pray, Moses falls flat on his face, the Catholic bows his knee, and the Protestant settles himself into a seat.

Social customs exhibit the same spectacle of variety and oppositions. English mothers are the objects of solicitude after their confinement, and Basque fathers, at the birth of their children, are swathed in blankets and fed with pap. Filial love is here exhibited by protracting the life of parents by every scientific appliance available; there by cutting it short with a tomahawk.

Political organizations exhibit the same differences. Here the welfare of thousands is subject to the caprice of a tyrant; there all men are on an equality. Here is feudalism, there theocracy.

Under all these diversities, philosophy has been able to detect radical affinities and unity of causes. Thus, out of love to a mother, the Fiji eats her, and the European erects a mausoleum. The sentiment is the same, but the mode of exhibition is different.

In political economy, the motive impulse is self-preservation, which throws men together into communities, and teaches them, by a series of experiments, to elaborate a system of government conducive to the advance of society and to the preservation of individuality. Yet each tentative form is so different from another that it is at first sight difficult to see that their very difference is proof of the unity of their origin.

In natural science the same result is obtained. The surface of the earth is covered with a vast multitude of species of plants, differing in habits, mode of propagation, and manner of growth. If we suppose that nature is employing incalculable efforts to produce this diversity, we are mistaken. Take specimens from every quarter of the globe, and analyse them separately, and you will find that their composition is almost identical. Five or six substances have sufficed to give birth to these heterogeneous compound

organisms ; nay, further, a great number of them are combined in precisely equal proportions, and, however contrasting they may be in appearance, in reality they are identical. Two trees grow side by side in the same orchard ; they have precisely the same organic structure, and are composed of the same chemical constituents, arranged in the same proportions, and apparently in the same order. Their roots extract the same nutriment from the soil in the same manner, their leaves inhale and exhale the same gases ; they undergo the same changes of heat and cold, light and darkness ; yet one converts its juices into pears and the other into cherries.

Wherever we look, we find evidence that nature produces the most complex effects with the simplest means. This law holds when applied to the religious beliefs of humanity. They fall into groups, and are reducible to a common origin.

The religious idea, like everything else that is human, undergoes growth, maturity, and decay. Beliefs spring into life and exercise a spell over intellects and hearts, produce a splendid array of flowers, and then, as the icy breath of doubt touches them, their sap congeals, they shrivel up and die, yet not before they have scattered around them living germs of new beliefs. Religion is the phoenix of the fable ; growing old, it fires its nest, and in the flames finds renovation.

In its birth, it is a conception slowly evolved ; then it becomes all at once a living belief, vividly luminous. For a while its meaning is accepted as final ; then it becomes obscured, and again it bursts forth, brilliant and vigorous, at some other point.

Religion does not reach perfection of development at a bound. Generations pass away before it is brought to

maturity, and in its advance it passes through a series of modifications. The world is strewn with religious ideas in their different stages of development, and in each stage the form is startlingly unlike those which preceded and those which will succeed it. We erroneously suppose ourselves to be brought face to face simultaneously with a hundred different religions, whereas, in fact, we behold one religion in its transitory forms. It is hard to believe that Shamanism, Fetishism, Polytheism, and Monotheism are essentially one, and yet comparative theology proves conclusively their identity.

Nature swarms with analogies.

If we compare the new-born babe with what it was immediately before birth, we shall be amazed to see the metamorphosis which has been wrought. The organs of respiration present the most remarkable. From the first inspiration of the babe, a fresh process of aëration of the blood is commenced, which will continue throughout life, and the circulation of the blood establishes itself such as it will continue till death supervenes. But before birth one of the walls of the heart was pierced by a hole which permitted a circulation appropriate to a parasitic life; the lungs were inert, and the vessels designed to act in concert with the heart only served to convey from it to them the juices that build up their spongy fabric. But not in this particular alone is there startling change, nor is it confined to this period alone. The life and progress of the embryo from the moment of conception is one of marvellous transformation. At the moment of birth the heart is divided into four cavities grouped into a nearly cellular form. In the original sketch, it was very unlike the organ into which it becomes perfected at a later period. At first it is a simple undivided canal. This tube becomes doubled on itself,

assuming the shape of a horse-shoe. The interior is now subdivided into three cavities, of which the two external become gradually approximated, whilst the central chamber, outgrowing the others, especially at its convex border, bulges out and forms the future ventricles. By these and certain other changes the once simple straight tube is made, step by step, to assume the rounded form and complex structure of the fully developed heart.

And so with the rest of the system. The embryo in its earliest condition is nourished by absorbing from the parts in immediate contact with it alimentary materials, exactly in the same manner as any simple cellular plant obtains from the surrounding elements carbonic acid and water, and whatever else it needs for its growth. Its life is strictly analogous to that of the protozoa. This simple arrangement soon gives place to another, better able to meet the wants of the increasing embryo, namely, the network of blood-vessels which is now formed all over the sack containing the yolk. By these vessels the yolk, that store of nutriment which nature provides for the support of the foetus during the earlier stages of its existence, is absorbed and carried into the circulation of the embryo in the form of blood, into which it becomes converted. This plan also lasts but for a time; the yolk is all consumed, and the vesicle which contained it shrinks and disappears. But ere this the placenta has been formed, a temporary organ, by the means of which the blood of the foetus is brought into the most intimate relation to the blood of the mother; a relation very close, but without actual admixture of the two. The foetal blood is enabled to obtain from the blood of the parent all the nutriment that is requisite to bring the child to that state of development at which it is able to maintain a separate existence.

There is an incessant instability in the relations between the different parts of the little being, in whom the conditions of life, to arrive at their final expression, seem to be constrained to destroy each other. Before deciding on a direct course in the development of an organ, Nature appears to hesitate, and proceed tentatively. She abandons one point to turn her formative power on another; then she returns on her traces, and rapidly perfects what she had left for a while incomplete. From this irregular march result the greatest diversities in the general appearance which the embryo presents at different ages. It began like a cystic animal; from a central focus of life it resolved itself into axial action; and the parts were gradually differentiated. Before reaching the perfect type, it has traversed all the lower degrees at which the inferior creatures halt in their definite development. The embryonic life may be represented as composed of evolutive periods destined to sketch the features characterising each individual organism, beginning with the most general, and finishing with those which assign it its definite rank among the varieties of its species. It is a mechanism functioning long before it has reached its perfection, and Nature is never more admirable than when she allows us to surprise the ingenious expedients by which she works towards the contemplated form by passing through a succession of very different intermediary forms.

In like manner, but more openly, Nature leads other creatures through a series of types before she accomplishes her task. The loathsome maggot eventuates in a scarlet-eyed fly with gauzy wings, and a panoply of metallic golden green. The crinkled, apparently lifeless chrysalis hanging in the chink of the wall, bursts and discloses a gorgeous butterfly. A mass of jelly, dotted with pin-points

of black, nourishes those specks till they emerge as inform monsters with large heads, staring eyes, and a flexible tail; in a little while the tail is shed, legs are protruded, and the tadpole has developed into an elegant batrachian with delicately clouded skin.

The course of the religious idea in reaching maturity closely resembles the processes of nature sketched above. The shapeless religion of a primitive people gradually assumes a definite form. It is that of nature worship. It progresses through polytheism and idolatry, and emerges into monotheism or pantheism. Now it projects one religious feature, now another, into undue prominence; then it atrophies it, or develops other features, and so progresses by a series of jerks, till it reaches its ultimate limit. As we light on these religious embryos in all their stages of progression, we are startled at their monstrosity. But whence this monstrosity? The incompleteness of the work. Here the doctrine of sin has forced the sacrificial ritual into frightful exaggeration, there the doctrine of election has atrophied all independence of action. Here Nature is busy perfecting the emotional phase of religion, and there she is engaged upon intellectual elaboration.

The formation of each organ in the child is for its physical well-being, and the little creature is not perfected till every organ has reached its definite development. If we look at the embryo during that stage when with scant traces of limbs it has all the appearance of a little seal, it is repulsive. It is the same with religion. Every religious phase is a spiritual organ—is the expression of a religious tendency. Every creed in which all the religious tendencies of mankind are not perfectly developed and nicely co-ordinated is necessarily incomplete. When we shrink

from the licentious orgies of Baaltis, or shudder at the bloody rites of Moloch, we do so because the religion that sanctions them is structurally imperfect.

The motive force in religion is the stretching towards some spiritual aim, which we will call truth. What that truth is, can only be guessed in an early age, and can only be ascertained in the present by a categorical examination of the religious instincts of humanity. This motive force precipitates man into superstition; he takes hold of a single truth and makes a religious hobby of it, wholly oblivious of collateral truths. When he finds that he has gone wrong, he turns upon some forgotten truth, and runs away with that, only again to find that he is not right, and again to pass through a religious crisis and revolution. I may be allowed here to quote what I have said elsewhere.¹ Religion is, by the general consent of mankind, required to be based upon truth. The supreme importance of religion, as dealing with the mysteries of man's creation, being, and future existence, is acknowledged on all sides; and the duties it imposes are accepted as binding. But this deference is yielded only because religion is believed to be infallibly true. If in it there be uncertainty and unreliability, its obligations become intolerable, and its restraints are found to be unendurable. At intervals the speculative world is agitated. It slowly awakes to consciousness that the current religion does not satisfy the requirements of truth. It detects flaws in its title-deeds, or discovers that it possesses no credentials at all. It subjects the assertions of religion to scrutiny. It questions its authority. Far from acting on any blind instinct of repulsion, speculation pursues with determination and enthusiasm the analysis of

¹ Church and World, iii. 224 ; Longmans, 1868.

religion, that it may detach truth from those heterogeneous elements with which it has been combined by the fraud or ignorance of the past. Unlike Pilate, who, after asking what was truth, went forth leaving the question unsolved, with an intensity of purpose paralleled by that with which men in positions of danger strive for life, does it grapple with the momentous questions of theology, and wring from them a confession of their inherent truth or of their falsehood.

The world of thought, having satisfied itself with an answer—that answer being not always highly satisfactory, but contenting the existing state of apprehension—tranquillity ensues, during which men glory in the achievements of those who purged their creed of what was false, and brought it into a condition of supposed permanent incorruptibility. In these times of repose thought stagnates, no fresh grains of ideas are thrown out, or fall on soil too exhausted to receive them, whilst those dispersed by the foregoing storm slowly fecundate, flower, seed, and decay. The old forces have apparently expended themselves. But this is not the case. Silently and imperceptibly they are gathering for a fresh reassertion of their power, by overthrowing the purified faith, because it, too, has given evidence of imperfections, in order that a theology may be re-organized on a still newer and more complete system, which in its turn, in the fulness of time, will be itself subverted, after that it has satisfied the then cravings of men, and has accomplished its temporary mission.

We see the law of religious renewal actuating most of the religions of antiquity, advancing hand in hand with civilization. A barbarous mythology will not long content an intellectually cultivated people; and, unless a reformation be brought about, and a system be elaborated to meet

its requirements, that people must lapse into indifferentism or atheism. Babylonish idolatry was rebelled against by Yanbushadh, when the city was under the influence of social advance. Zoroaster reformed the Iranian creed when Persia was casting off its primeval barbarism. Buddha upreared his system against a degraded Brahmanism, to satisfy an awakening Indian mind. Votan reasserted the truth as the basis of religion in Mexico, when the Aztec empire was exhibiting a capacity for progression. And Mahomet subverted the Ssabian polytheism, when that polytheism was dying a natural death.

The law of development, which is impressed on all animate nature, is stamped as well on religious beliefs. As the lowest organisms contain rudimentary traces of members perfected in those above them, so also do inferior theological systems exhibit an upward tendency. And, in cases where civilization and mental culture are not checked, the lower type of religion will eventuate in one higher, truer, and nobler than itself; not altogether perfect, maybe, but in advance of its predecessor, and containing within itself springs which will impel it forward in its turn. Beliefs are never stationary; they are in a state of continual flux. In this they resemble languages, which, though brought to an apparent standstill by a classic literature, are full of dialectic currents, which interpenetrate, and in course of time overflow that barrier. "Languages," says Professor Max Müller, "are constantly changing; but never in the history of man has there been a new language. What does that mean? Neither more nor less than that, in speaking as we do, we are using the same materials, however broken up, crushed, and put together anew, which were handled by the first speakers, *i.e.*, the first real ancestor of our race. Call that ancestor Adam.

and the world is still speaking the language of Adam. Call those ancestors Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and the races of mankind are still speaking the languages of Shem, Ham, and Japheth."¹

In the following chapters we shall trace the history of the evolution of the religious idea through its different stages. In one race its development has been rapid, in another slow; imperfect here, complete there: here one practice is exaggerated, there another, and there again a third has been built up to harmonize the other two. Thus the world is strewn with egg, grub, chrysalis, and butterfly creeds.

The march of the religious idea depends on accidents. It is accelerated or retarded by those physical circumstances which control the progress of the human race in every department. Geographical situation, social habits, and political fortune have left their stamp upon the religious sentiment and religious idea. The blustering nature of the Scandinavian gods reflects the characteristics of a boreal climate; the graceful mythology of Greece mirrors the graceful contours of a favoured southern land. The sanguinary worship of the Aztecs arose from their having been compelled to battle their way into power, and to preserve their supremacy by force of arms. The hippophagism of the Tartar and ancient Norseman sprang up from the necessities of a nomad life, and becoming a habit, became also a religious act. The cannibalism of the Maories was a sacred ceremony, because the islands they inhabited were void of mammals, and the race would have died out for want of nutritious diet had it not stocked its larder

¹ Chips, &c., ii. 254.

with human flesh. The desert made the Arab monotheistic; the plains of Mesopotamia, bare of interest, directed the Chaldean into astrolatry; and the mighty Nile flooded, not the valley of Egypt only, but the theodicy of the people also.

Variety of natural conditions originates variety in natural types; the friction of different interests produces originality; the variety in climates produces variety in men. That which has made Europe great, and with her greatness has made her full of currents of religious speculation, is the great variety of races, classes, and individuals gathered together in a limited area, and with that area so indented with seas, so broken into varieties of level by mountains, so diversified in climate, that its geographical character creates a number of interests, and the clashing together of interests makes the race progressive. In the eternal summer of tropical Africa, the negro stagnates. Centuries roll over him, and he is the same. He has not the mental energy to add together numbers, nor the inventive genius to devise letters, nor the speculative *elan* to rise above fetishism.

This also is quite* according to the analogy of nature. There is a class of organisms whose origin has not yet been discovered, but which seem to be born of contingent circumstances. It is possible to provoke their appearance by giving occasion to the circumstances favourable to their birth, as by leaving certain liquids at rest under the requisite influences, or by allowing organized substances to decompose. One may, moreover, obtain different beings according as these corpuscles are suffered to vivify in light or in darkness; in the first case they produce animalcules, in the second cryptogamous plants: not only so, but the development of certain animals, when larvæ, may be

arrested and perfected in this way or that way at will, according to the course of treatment to which they are subjected.

Religious ideas have been quite as dependent on circumstances for their regular or intermittent advance, and for the peculiar type which they have assumed.

With religious ideas, as with races and individuals, there is a constant struggle for existence, which results in the disappearance of baser forms before those of a higher type. The Finnish epic "*Kalewala*" closes with an account of the god Wainamoinen entering his coracle, and paddling north to the wastes of snow and eternal silence when he hears of the birth of Christ. Thus every imperfect creed has fled before that which is more perfect. If the people are mentally and morally advanced enough to receive it, then, well and good, the Dragons fall before the ark of a better covenant; but, if the higher creed is pressed on a people not sufficiently educated to embrace it, it suffers degradation till it reaches their level. Thus there is a retrograde movement in religions, a tendency to lose vigour, and originality, and refinement; to become torpid and commonplace. The symbol loses its significance and is materialized, the allegory is perverted into a sacred tradition, and the hypothesis hardens into a doctrine.

Religion, as has been already shown, is the synthesis of thought and sentiment. It is the representation of a philosophic idea. It always reposes on some hypothesis. At first it is full of vigour, constantly on the alert to win converts. Then the hypothesis is acquiesced in; it is received as final; its significance evaporates. The priests of ancient times were also philosophers, but not being able always to preserve their intellectual superiority, their

doctrines became void of meaning, hieroglyphs of which they had lost the key, and then speculation ate its way out of religion, and left it an empty shell of ritual observance void of vital principle. Philosophy alone is not religion ; nor is sentiment alone religion ; but religion is that which, based on an intelligible principle, teaches that principle as dogma, exhibits it in worship, and applies it in discipline.

Dogma, worship, and discipline are the constituents, so to speak, the mind, spirit, and body of religion. Every religion must have some reason to give for its existence. It must solve certain difficulties which perplex man, by telling him what is the cause of all the effects he cannot himself account for, and whither his spiritual instincts tend, and what will be his destiny after death? Its doctrine must be intelligible ; that is, on the level of the comprehension of those who are expected to embrace it : for, if it be below this level, it will be discarded as insufficient ; if it be above it, it will suffer immediate transformation and degradation. "Why did you baptize that Iroquois?" asked a Huron Christian of the missionary ; "if he gets to heaven before us Hurons, he will scalp us, and turn us out."¹ "Shall we have, in heaven, better pies than those the French make?" asked another Indian.²

Worship is homage rendered to God. It is an attempt to bring man and God into mutual relation. The form assumed by it to ensure permanence must harmonize with the dogmatic notion of God. If the god be an ideal of beauty, and his worship be conducted on a type the perfection of ugliness, one of two results must ensue ; the idea of the god will be lowered to the type of worship, or the service will be revolted from by the worshipper. Thus,

¹ Le Mercier : *Relation des Hurons* ; 1637.

² Parkman : *Picneers of France* ; 1867.

some of the Mexican gods were ideally beneficent and holy, and the devotion felt towards them exhibited itself in the sacrifice of that which by man is regarded as the most precious offering he can make—human life. When these benevolent gods' altars reeked with gore, their own characters deteriorated, and they came to be regarded as blood-thirsty and malicious deities. Man at once perceives the incongruity between the mode of worship and the idea of the object worshipped, and he seeks to harmonize them in the best way he can, generally by dragging the idea of God to the level of the mode of worship, rather than by elevating the worship to conform to the idea of God.

Discipline is a rule of moral observance. Man exists in a relative position towards his fellow-men, and towards God. If the religion affect to interfere with his social and political relations, it lays down laws to direct his conduct as a member of society and of a political body. If it confine its attention to the regulation of his spirit, then its table of commandments bears only on his responsibilities towards God.

If the precepts imposed with the sanction of religion be too numerous, minute, and burdensome, and be arbitrary, of no appreciable significance and practical use to himself or others, before long he will break the yoke from off his neck.

A flaw in any one of these particulars will cause a disruption in any religious system, and the substitution of another system supposed to be free from this defect. When a religion fails to meet the demands of the intellect, the cravings of the heart, or the requirements of the moral sense, its doom is sealed. A reformation ensues. The new religion may not be better, but the fact of a change having been wrought is in itself evidence of the imperfection of the

former system, writing upon it, "Tekel: thou art weighed in the balance, and found wanting."

But in religion there is not only a dynamic force, but there is a static force as well—a force which tends to impede development, and whose action is at one time beneficial, at another detrimental, if I may use the term "static force" in the somewhat novel sense of a force that obstructs change, and not of one which, in combination with others maintains the stability of a system. Every religion exhibits, more or less, this double tendency: one liberal, the other conservative; one having for purpose the giving free scope to the expansion of man's faculties and activities, the other endeavouring to control the faculties and limit individual and social independence. Nowhere has one or other of these tendencies triumphed absolutely. Among those nations which have been subject to the most despotic theocracies, liberty of thought, like a subterranean fire, hidden and working secretly, suddenly manifests itself in eruptions and violent disturbance of the long regnant tranquillity. On the other hand, among prosperous nations which glory in their liberty, the theocratic element lies in some fold of the law, or presents itself to the imagination as an escape from the tyranny of public opinion, and it suddenly emerges from obscurity to grapple with its ancient rival; and sometimes successfully.

The force arresting rapid change in religious beliefs exhibits itself in the formation of religious habits, and in the constitution of theocracies.

A word on habits.

They arrest development in two ways: first through individual association; and secondly, through destruction of individuality.

A little child, with judgment unformed, and without experience to guide it, and tell it what to seek and what to shun, obeys in nearly all its determinations, and consequently in its acts, the example of others. It does what it sees others do, till the mode of viewing objects and acting upon sensations becomes habitual. It would seem as though every act directed the flow of a vital stream over some soft and loamy surface, which it furrowed into a channel, to be deepened by after acts, till an alteration of the course becomes an impossibility. Habit, feeble at first, grows daily stronger, and at length becomes irresistible. Habit is a second nature, says the proverb; but the truth is understated; habit becomes nature itself. It is, in fact, a law of nature manifesting itself in things called material as well as in those which are intelligent. The more material and rude beings are, the more readily do they contract habits, and the more sure they are, having contracted habits, to remain invariable under them. Possibly immobility may be a habit of the stone, and it does not alter its mode of being because it is so habituated to inertion that it has not the vigour to break through it. Plants are susceptible of contracting habits. A branch which of its own accord would assume a vertical position, may be forced by an obstacle to take up one which is horizontal; it resists at first, but after a while it yields, and having accepted a horizontal growth, prefers it. We know also, by observation, that animals can be trained to a number of actions which are not instinctive, and that after the habit has become old-established, they act upon it with apparent spontaneity, and transmit the habit to their offspring. So with man. A habit once acquired is never wholly cast off. An habitual mode of believing, thinking, worshipping, becomes a portion of his nature. His convictions may be

violently dislocated, but the customary manner of thinking and expressing himself maintains itself. He knows that the sun does not revolve about the earth, and yet he always thinks and speaks of it as if it did, because his senses have habituated him to regard it as rising and setting. In like manner, habits founded in faith prolong themselves long after that faith is extinct. What men are accustomed to they are attached to; their reason and their sentiment are ranged on opposite sides, and they allow reason to wink at the habits to which they cling with affection. Use becomes law, and they will not overthrow use except when its burden becomes intolerable. The Roskolniks separated from the Orthodox Church in Russia, because that Church admitted an improvement in the mode of singing, and in the painting of icons, and in the cut of the priests' hats. Habit was so strong even in Socrates, that he, in dying, offered a cock to Esculapius, in whom he had ceased to believe.

The tendency of civilization and social levelling is to destroy individuality. In a rude age every man thinks for himself, and believes what he thinks proper; but those times when liberty of thought and expression are most loudly proclaimed are precisely the times when least originality of thought will manifest itself, and the smallest amount of real liberty is accorded. For that habit of thought, belief, and action which is common to the many becomes a law for all, and an infringement of the customary is resented by the community. The giant forms of religious reformers appear in the chiaroscuro of violently contrasting social positions and political systems, but only commonplace characters creep through the uniform grey of social equality. People believe in herds, and disbelieve in herds. One Swiss canton is Catholic, the next is Protestant; nearly all the inhabitants of each are of one way of thinking. The

cantons of Berne and Lucerne are both German, but in the former Protestantism is the general creed; in the latter Catholicism. The men of Vaud and the men of Chablais are alike French, but the first hold with Calvin, and the second hold with the Pope. This is because men do not ask themselves, 'What is right?' but, 'What do others think right?' They shrink from adopting a view which is not that of all their neighbours. Popular opinion fixes the creed, the ethics, and the ritual of the religion of the many. The censorship of the public invades every act and feeling of personal conduct, and it holds up the consent of the majority as a standard of orthodoxy, and of sentiment, and of morality, to which the minority are forced to conform: the method of compulsion is at one time persecution with faggot and sword, at another with slander and obloquy. People shrink from the adoption of an unpopular line of conduct, and the habit of believing and thinking and acting like every one else becomes confirmed. "It does not occur to them to have any inclination, except for what is customary. Thus, the mind itself is bowed to the yoke: even in what people do for pleasure, conformity is the first thing thought of; they like in crowds; they exercise choice only among things commonly done; peculiarity of taste, eccentricity of conduct, are shunned equally with crimes, until, by dint of not following their own nature, they have no nature to follow; their human capacities are withered and starved; they become incapable of any strong wishes or native pleasures, and are generally without either opinions or feelings of home-growth, or properly their own."¹

We will consider next the theocratic force arresting development. God is held to govern the world directly or indirectly.

¹ J. S. Mill: *On Liberty*, p. 36; People's edition, 1867.

When God is supposed to govern the world directly, the theocracy is divine; God Himself is King.

When He governs indirectly, the intermediaries are priests, kings, or revealed codes. Consequently, we have four stages of theocratic civilization; three forms of religious arrest:—

The divine age, when God was king.

The sacerdotal age, when the priest was king.

The monarcho-sacerdotal age, when the king was priest.

The bibliocratic age, when the authority was lodged in a charter.

In Ethiopia, the gods were at first regarded as the only kings; the priests succeeded them; he among them who was touched by the image of the god carried in procession was proclaimed sovereign by the people, who regarded him as the elect of the gods. Warrior kings succeeded, under the authority and direction of the priest, till they acquired sufficient independence to break the sacerdotal yoke.¹

According to Herodotus and Diodorus, Egypt was successively governed by gods of first, second, and third orders. Those of the first order represent the divine age; those of the second and third were pontiffs, or human gods, and constitute the sacerdotal age; finally, with Menes, the sovereignty passed from the sacerdotal caste to that of the warriors, but did not cease to be a theocracy still. A Pharaoh who could order the male children of a portion of his subjects to be drowned like whelps, might not assume despotic power till he had passed through the school of the clergy, and had been incorporated into their order. When consecrated, he regulated the whole cycle of religious worship, as well as the machinery of the Egyptian state. In Peru, where the Emperor chose mates for his marriageable

¹ Diod. Sicul. iii. 5, 6.

subjects, and regulated their daily diet, a word against the Inca was regarded as a blasphemy against God. In China, religion and politics have become so fused that they have become indistinguishable. Mounted on his "Dragon throne," the Emperor is always orthodox, is the source and champion of established order, the exponent of the mysterious principles which underlie the course of nature, and the organ of that energy which lingers about and above us. Heaven itself is present in him, and he becomes in that presence a celestial potentate, and the pattern of perfection to every member of the human race.

Among the Hebrews, the theocracy passed through all four forms. Jehovah, the Most High, was the sovereign of the race, reigning directly by Himself, and indirectly through prophets, Levites, judges, kings, and the law. This sovereignty was at first exercised immediately; it was so in the age of the Patriarchs. Moses brought it into the sacerdotal form, which continued after the rise of the monarcho-theocratic period, beginning with Saul, who passed through the school of the prophets and was specially inspired. David, Solomon, and their successors retained this sacred authority and character, and were always in communication with God, either directly or mediately. The ruin of the Jewish monarchy put a term to this age, and it was succeeded by the bibliocratic age, when the source of authority, of law, the revelation of the truth, was sought in sacred writings.

The history of Christianity exhibits three successions. The apostolic and sub-apostolic age was one of pure divine theocracy. To this succeeded the sacerdotal theocracy of the middle ages, gradually tending towards regal theocracy, exhibiting itself in the consecration of kings, and resignation to their hands of the appointment of prelates and

the regulation of ecclesiastical discipline. They became monarchs "by the grace of God," "Most Christian," "Apostolic" kings, "eldest sons of the Church," and "Defenders of the Faith." The next stage was the bibliocratic age, opened with the Reformation. The Scriptures were then assumed to be the ultimate authority on doctrine and ethics; they were supposed to contain "all things necessary to salvation, so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."¹

This mode of arresting modification is not, however, final, and cannot in the nature of things be final: for, firstly, the significance of the terms in which the revelation is couched must be subject to the most conflicting interpretations; and secondly, the authority of the revelation will be constantly exposed to be questioned, and the genuineness of the documents to be disputed.

It would be unjust to conclude that the static force in religion is invariably mischievous. Far from it; its operation has been often salutary. Without it religious ideas would have never assumed consistency; the world would have been filled with as many religions as there were individuals, and these persons would have been continually modifying their views, which they would as lightly fling aside as they would lightly adopt them. The definite systematization of religion would prove a link of cohesion binding tribe to tribe into the nation, and thus producing civilization. Religion has been the nurse of science, of the arts, of poetry, painting, sculpture, architecture, and music.

¹ Articles of Religion, Art. vi.

It has been so solely because the evolution of new theological speculations has been arrested.

In the most remote ages of which tradition speaks, Egypt was a country inhabited by wandering hordes of shepherds, hunters, and fishers. A few centuries later we find the same land covered with crops, teeming with busy people, who are obedient to law, devoted to agriculture, and actively intelligent. How was this transformation wrought? By the establishment of a sacerdotal caste, and a consolidation of the floating theological dreams of the barbarous natives into a religious system. Among the North American Indians religious belief is not fixed, and it changes in every generation, and every sacred myth becomes altered in the mouth of every narrator. These peoples have been singularly free from any tendency to arrest the flux of belief, and they have never emerged out of barbarism.

Probably the static force is as necessary as the dynamic force to produce the well-being of man, and preserve equilibrium. A theocracy, up to a certain point, is educative; beyond that point, it is obstructive. Religious independence, without religious conservatism to fret it, would lapse into irreligious indifference. These are opposed forces, but their mean is human advantage. Where there are no currents, stagnation supervenes.

Thus the history of great nations exhibits them reeling from one extreme to another, but at each recoil shooting forward.

The tendency to crystallize and the tendency to dissolve are apparent in all the great religions of antiquity, under different forms, according to the temperament and genius and degree of civilization peculiar to each people.

In Egypt, the double tendency appeared in a struggle

between castes, and especially between the priestly and military castes. From the reign of Menes, the first human king of that country, the theocracy protested, and the priests forced the successors of Menes to inscribe on their monuments curses against that prince. Under Cheops and Chephren the temples were closed, and the sacerdotal caste appeared to be crushed; but it revived more powerful than ever with the election of Sethos, priest of Pthah; the warriors, despoiled of their lands, abandoned the king, and emigrated in a mass to Ethiopia. The inferior castes profited by this emigration; they were armed for the defence of the country, and were called to public life. Psammetichus and his successors opened the ports to strangers; Greeks were admitted into Egypt as mercenaries; a Greek dynasty replaced that of the kings descendants of the gods; the isolation and ancient immobility of Egypt gave way to progress, to the exchange of products and of ideas. The old theocratic forms survived, but the spirit was gone; and to the priests themselves the mysteries of their order, their sacred books, their symbolic ceremonies, became incomprehensible, and as hard to decipher as the hieroglyphic inscriptions that adorned their temple walls.

In Judæa, the powerful theocracy under Saul and his successors found a counterpoise in prophetism. The kings, though true to the theocratic principle, attempted to infuse heathenism into the veins of Mosaism. Solomon built the Temple, and dedicated it to the Most High, but he was a heathen at heart. The tone of his estimate of life and of society, and his views of government, were all essentially heathen; his habits, manners, and morals were therefore heathen. And the same may be said of his successors. But opposed to them were the prophets, men from among the people, pleaders and defenders of the popular cause.

In India, which has long and erroneously been regarded as a land of immobility, the religious life appears more active and developed than in any other country. The struggle between the two principles or systems of liberty and religious despotism is found to have raged there, as in Egypt, under the form of caste-rivalry. From the earliest times, when India was conquered by the Aryans, the Brahmins formed themselves into a superior caste, in opposition to the Kshatriyas, or warriors, who strove in vain to overthrow them. The history of these struggles has not been preserved, but traces of them remain in the great epics of India. From that time the warriors only preserved and exercised their privileges under the tutelage of the priesthood, and bound hand and foot by sacred laws.

Such an enormous tension of the theocratic power necessarily produced a corresponding reaction; it manifested itself, not by a violent revolution, nor by a special revelation, but by the calm and logical reasoning of a philosophic doctrine, which, after its founder, has been called Buddhism. Buddhism, at the outset, appears as a rational protest against the system of castes, and of religious and political despotism. Çakya-mouni, the promulgator of this doctrine, attacked with equal violence despotic tyranny, formalism, hypocrisy, and hereditary monopoly of religious or political power. To the outcast and the poor he opened a road, without distinction of persons, to that religious life which had been hitherto regarded as the special prerogative of the Brahman. To these principles of liberty Buddhism owed its tremendous influence and rapid progress. But it is so true that every religion, however liberal and spiritual it may be at first, must fall under the influence of the converse tendency, that we see Buddhism almost everywhere giving birth to results diame-

trically contradictory to its primitive doctrine. Thus, in Ceylon, it admits and tolerates the existence of caste. In China, the Buddhist patriarchs are placed above the laity, and receive the pompous title of "Princes of Doctrine." In Thibet, a theocracy as powerful as that of the Brahmans, and more despotically constituted, has issued from the pure democracy of Buddha. The chief of the priests, the Grand Llama, is the incarnation of the Divinity, and is adored as God, all-powerful, infallible, immortal, having the supreme control over all things temporal and spiritual, the power of remitting sins, and of dominating over the political chiefs.

Christianity has exhibited the same contradiction in its development. Sacerdotal despotism succeeded in the middle ages in concentrating all power over consciences and intelligences in the hands of an order whose centre was in Rome. Philosophy was made the handmaid of religion, and not its consort. Innovation was error; speculation was profanity. Aristotelianism invaded the intellectual world, and dogmatism took the alarm, and denounced the syllogistic and rational method. S. Thomas Aquinas filled his pitcher at the fountain of the Stagyra, and poured it forth in theologic wine: then Aristotle was countenanced, Descartes was persecuted; but afterwards Cartesian philosophy was reverted to as a safeguard of religion. Galileo was imprisoned, Newton condemned, and, after all, their views have been accepted. "Strange destiny, that of theology, to be condemned to be for ever attaching itself to those systems which are crumbling away," writes M. Maury; "to be essentially hostile to all science that is novel, and to all progress."¹

The Reformation was a revolt against that oppressive

¹ *Essai sur les Légendes pieuses*, p. xix. ; Paris, 1843.

despotism of the Roman theocracy which crushed the human intellect and paralyzed freedom of action.

But what was the result of the Reformation? The establishment of a royal alongside of a biblical theocracy. The Crown became the supreme head to order what religion is to consist of, how worship is to be conducted, and what articles of faith are to be believed. Or else religion is anchored to a sacred volume, and "a mere literal adherence to the text of the Bible has constituted as complete a spiritual slavery as any which had been imposed by the dictation of a domineering priesthood, and an infallible Church; they did but transfer the claim of oracular authority from the priest to the text, or rather to the preacher's interpretation of it. Such was the first principle and foundation of the system which may be best designated by the name of Puritanism, which has exerted as pernicious an influence over modern Christianity, on the one side, as Romanism on the other."¹

In China we have an instance of a vast nation in which no counter currents of religious despotism and religious freedom occur: the result is absolute indifference. For thousands of years the Chinese have been stationary; they all think alike, behave alike, believe alike, disbelieve alike. Habit has materialized them, and brought them to permanent rest.

In Europe we have an instance of a perpetual clashing of these antagonistic forces, resulting in an earnest and enthusiastic passion for truth, which those petrified by an absolute theocracy, or those weakened by the wash of fluctuating opinion, can never realize.

In conclusion: It seems certain that for man's spiritual

¹ Baden Powell: *Christianity without Judaism*, p. 81; London, 1858.

well-being these forces need co-ordination. Under an infallible guide, regulating every moral and theological item of his spiritual being, his mental faculties are given him that they may be atrophied, like the eyes of the oyster, which, being useless in the sludge of its bed, are re-absorbed. Under a perpetual modification of religious belief, his convictions become weak and watery, without force, and destitute of purpose. In the barren wilderness of Sinai there are here and there green and pleasant oases. How come they there? By basaltic dykes arresting the rapid drainage which leaves the major part of that land bald and waste. So, in the region of religion, revelations and theocratic systems have been the dykes saving it from barrenness, and encouraging mental and sentimental fertility.

CHAPTER VII

THE ORIGIN OF POLYTHEISM

Difficulty of realizing the state of mind of a savage—The first stage in primæval religion one of autotheism ; then a perception and veneration of resistances—Classification of resisting forces—Nature worship—Brute worship—Personification of phenomena—The Greek the typical polytheist—The names of the sun become distinct solar deities—Moral deities—Astrolatry—Theogonies.

IT is no easy matter for a man of ordinary education to form a notion of the mental fallowness of a rustic of his own day ; it is far more difficult for him to divest his mind of all its acquisitions through study and observation, and reduce his ideas to the level of those of the progenitor of his race, whom we will call Areios.

This, however, must be our task if we are to arrive at a true conception of the dawn and development of religious ideas. With our clear sense of the oneness of God, of His moral perfections, and of His relation to nature, we can with difficulty picture to ourselves the rude theological attempts of our early forefathers. The path leading to theism is to our eyes a way of light, and we forget that it is like the path traced by the sun upon the waters, over restless waves and unfathomed deeps. Man had to fray his road through a wilderness of fable before he could

reach the truth, and traverse a multitude of intermediary deities before he could conceive a King of gods which, though it is an idea divided from pure monotheism by a gulf, is yet within view of it.

Let us attempt to cast ourselves back in imagination to pre-historic ages, and observe the acts and measure the thoughts of Areios, new upon the earth. All his faculties are in abeyance, and he knows not what capacities and powers are his. The world outside is nothing to him yet; he first explores his own being. He has a vigorous intelligence, without being aware of it, for he has not used it. Slowly he acquires facts, assimilates them, and draws conclusions from them. In his attempts to advance he stumbles and falls. Yet every fault gives him an impetus forward. The pain produced by error is the whip that urges him into civilization. Before man can learn to do things right, he must do things wrong. Before he can discover the right path in science, religion, and political economy, he has to flounder through a bog of blunders.

The girl strums discords before she strikes harmonies; the boy scratches pothooks before he draws straight lines. The early religious beliefs of the human family are its discords and pothooks, the stages of error by which it has travelled before correct ideas can be attained.

At first, then, man is conscious of no existence save his own; he is like the brute, self-centred and self-sufficient; he is his own God. He is Autotheist.

But presently he feels resistances. Effects surround him of which he is not the cause. The outlines of the exterior world loom out of the fog and assume precision. He acknowledges that there are other objects, that there exist other forces, beside himself. The convulsions of nature,

the storm, the thunder, the exploding volcano, the raging sea, fill him with a sense of there being a power superior to his own, before which he must bow. His religious thought, vague and undetermined, is roused by the opposition of nature to his will.

His next stage is the classification of the physical forces. His intellectual ideas are like metal in fusion: the material world is the mould into which they flow and from which they receive their shape. Nature is mighty, beautiful, wise. He bows to it in its various manifestations, and adores the sun, the sky, the dawn, the tempest, without for a moment forgetting their physical character. It is not inert nature that he worships, but one animated, and invested by him with his own sentiments; for he has not yet learned to distinguish himself from other creatures, as the sole rational being. Therefore he attributes to all objects a life and a reason analogous to his own. Children in play act in the same manner; addressing their dolls and pets as though they were endowed with understanding.

Caspar Hauser, that mysterious boy brought up in isolation and ignorance, was a striking example of the degree of intelligence which primitive peoples must have possessed. He exhibited almost throughout his whole life an incredible difficulty in distinguishing those things which were animate from those which were inanimate. Every movement he supposed to be spontaneous. If he touched his little wooden horses and they moved, he attributed the motion to their shrinking from his touch. If any one struck a stock or stone, he exhibited distress, thinking that these objects must be sensible to pain. Mademoiselle Leblanc, the savage woman, of whom Louis Racine has given such a valuable biography, exhibited a precisely similar want of capacity.

The intelligence apparent in the beast bears such a close resemblance to that in man, that it is not to be wondered at if Areios failed to detect the line of demarcation between instinct and reason. It was not a merely fancied external resemblance between the beast and man, but it was a perception of the similarity of the skill, pursuits, desires, sufferings, and griefs of the brute to those of himself which led him to seek within the beast something analogous to the soul within himself; and this, notwithstanding the points of contrast existing between them, elicited in his mind so strong a sympathy that, without a great stretch of imagination, he invested the animal with his own attributes, and with the full powers of his own understanding. He regarded it as actuated by the same motives, as subject to the same laws of honour, as moved by the same prejudices; and the higher the beast was in the scale, the more he regarded it as his equal, and even as his superior. In the struggle with the savage races of beasts in the hunter's life, how many members of the tribe were tracked down and devoured? Man was forced to protect himself against the lion, the tiger, the wolf, and above all the serpent, which, gliding through the herbage, struck, when least expected, its poison-fangs into his flesh, and slew him. In order to preserve himself from their attacks, he adored those which he could not master, and thus arose zoolatria.

If the worship of the lion and the tiger died out, it was because man discovered the use of iron, and could stab or shoot his god. If ophic worship perpetuated itself long after other forms of zoolatry had disappeared, it was because the serpent was that creature against which weapons and precautions were of least avail. In southern lands the dread of the serpent is most intense, for there the danger arising from it is most felt, and it is because this danger

can be so imperfectly guarded against that, among the religions of hot countries,

“The trail of the serpent is over them all.”

In the North, the bear was the object of dread, and consequently the object of worship. The Finn believed it came from the land of sun and moon, and was born miraculously,¹ and he venerated it as an inferior deity.

Sun, moon, and stars were also invested by man with a life and knowledge like his own. “He begins to lift up his eyes,” says Professor Max Müller; “he stares at the tent of heaven, and asks who supports it? He opens his ears to the winds, and asks them whence and whither? He is awakened from darkness and slumber by the light of the sun, and him whom his eyes cannot behold, and who seems to grant him the daily pittance of his existence, he calls ‘his life, his breath, his brilliant Lord and Protector.’ He gives names to all the powers of nature.”² He could not name the objects of nature without giving them sex, nor speak of abstract qualities without determining them by articles. Every subject in a phrase was presented as an acting being, every idea became an action, and every action whether transitory or continuous was limited in duration by the tense of the verb. We are in the habit of compensating in our own minds for the deficiencies of language; but this habit was as yet unformed by Areios. With him every object was personified and endowed with life by the exigencies of speech. Every substantive was an animated being, every verb a physical act. Areios personified his very words. The hymn addressed to some deified natural object, as it escaped his lips invested itself with human

¹ Kalewala, Run. xlvi. 355-458.

² Chips, &c. i. 69.

attributes. The speech of the Hindu Areios became incarnate as Sarasvatî; his prayer was deified as Vâgdevatâ. It was the same with the Greek Areios; in Homer, we see prayers (*Ἀιταί*) regarded as the divine daughters of Zeus;¹ and by Philochorus, the first-fruits of sacrifice are spoken of as *θυλαί*, god-like daughters of earth. But this impersonation was carried to greater exaggeration by the Indian than by the Greek. Every incident and circumstance connected with sacrifice detached itself from the object, clothed itself with human nature, and was sublimated into divinity. His excited imagination saw heavenly beings, Apris, in the flames that danced on the altar. The herbage around, the gates of the sacred enclosure, the mortar in which the twigs of the soma were pounded, the very spoon which scattered the drops of the sacred drink upon the fire, the wood of the sacrifice, were divine; nay, even the fingers of the priest became ten priestesses assisting at the offering.²

The spectacles of nature now became a stately drama in which all the actors were divine. The sun was supposed to be a warrior clad in golden panoply, the moon to be a queen, the stars to be armies of heroes or spirits; the rivers moved of their own accord, the tides were the pulsations of the living heart of ocean. "Thus, the ancients spoke of everything as if it were alive, and instead of saying, as we say, that the morning comes before the sunset, they spoke of the sun as the lover of the dawn, or morning, who went before him, as longing to overtake her, and as killing her with his bright rays, which shone like spears. We talk of the clouds which scud along the sky; but they spoke of the cows of the sun, which the children of the morning drove every day to their pastures in the blue

¹ *Iliad*, i. 502.

² Maury : *Croyances et Légendes*, p. 89 ; Paris, 1863

fields of heaven. So too, when the sun set, they said that the dawn, with its soft and tender light, had come to soothe her son or her husband in his dying hour. In the same way, the sun was the child of darkness, and in the morning he wove for his bride in the heavens a fairy network of clouds, which reappeared when she came back to him in the evening. When the sun shone with a pleasant warmth, they spoke of him as the friend of man; when his scorching heat brought a drought, they said that the sun was slaying his children, or that some one else, who knew not how to guide them, was driving the horses of his chariot through the sky. As they looked on the dark clouds which rested on the earth without giving any rain, they said that the terrible being whom they named the snake or dragon was shutting up the waters in a prison-house. When the thunder rolled, they said that this hateful monster was uttering his hard riddles; and when, at last, the rain burst forth, they said that the bright sun had slain his enemy, and brought a stream of life for the thirsting earth."¹

It is as exhibiting this process of the human mind in the mythopœic age that the Vedas are so valuable. They are a photograph of religious opinion rising to the adoration of nature, and holding in suspense the material out of which mythology will be constructed, before it falls and foams into polytheism, and strews the world with its treasures of fable.

Let us look once more at Areios, and follow his wanderings. The Shemite remains on his sandy plains gazing into the cloudless sky, lost in the sense of the majesty of infinity, and slowly excogitating the idea of a sole God. The Turanian has planted his lodge on the waste of Northern Asia. He crouches over his fire hearkening to the

¹ Cox: *Manual of Mythology*, p. xi.; London, 1867.

sob and growl of the wind, or he creeps through the forests of the Altai, and hears on all sides unintelligible whispers that fill his soul with terror. He conceives himself the sport of spiritual influences, vague, mysterious, and unknown.

But the Aryan grows up among mountain pastures, whence he watches

“Far up the solitary morning smite
The streaks of virgin snow.”

Heaven is not so far above him. The clouds spread and flash fire below his feet. Impelled by that daring and vagabond curiosity which drives the bird from its nest, he rushes from his heights, like one of his mountain burns, “in cataract after cataract to the sea;” his whole being fresh with the mountain breezes, and fragrant with the upland thyme. We will follow one stream of that great family which has divided and watered nearly the whole earth. As the Hellenic Areios descends the mountains, before him lies a little strait, across which, it was said, an ox had swum. He overleaps it, and is in possession of a land of promise. Under a blue sky, in which the clouds lie tranquil like lodged avalanches, in the midst of a twinkling sea, strewn with fairy groups of islands, is a little mulberry leaf of land attached to a continental bough, a little land ribbed with mountain chains of rough-hewn marble, veined with purple gorges, pierced with winding gulfs; a land of vineyards and olive-groves, where roses bloom all the year, and where the pomegranate holds its glowing cheek to a sun that is never shorn of its rays.

In Greece, nature is easy and refined; it presents no abrupt contrasts, produces no giant effects. Man naturally assumes prominence, and nature becomes a lovely back-

ground. To the imaginative spirit of the Greek, this was no uninhabited land; everywhere his glad heart recognised the presence of a God.

“Sunbeams upon distant hill
Gliding apace with shadows in their train,
Might, with small help from fancy, be transformed
Into fleet Oreads sporting visibly.”

Springs, daughters of heaven, fluttered down the mountain sides, to meet in the meadows below, through which to dance and race. Over the sea, stained with all the dyes of a peacock's neck, tripped the daughters of ocean, with their *ἀνήριθμον γέλασμα*, to gambol on the yellow sands, or peer timorously down the olive chasms where throbbed and howled the children of Ceto, Phorkys, and Thaumias.

The Christian believes in a Communion of Saints, an interchange of loving offices between the living and the dead. The Greek had his intercommunion, too, but it was with Nature in all her forms—a questioning humanity and an answering nature. Many a beautiful myth tells of a nymph pursued by a mortal and taking refuge by transforming herself into bird, or insect, or flower,—symbols these of the Greek religious instinct seeking the divine and finding it in nature.

If we compare the religion of the Hebrew with that of the Greek, we see that the eye of each people has been focussed differently. Far off in abstractions the Hebrew discerned his God; around and in himself the Hellene discovered his. The sober use of adjectives in the Hebrew poets contrasts with the prodigality of epithets employed by the Greek poets, and shows us that the former were penetrated with the ideas of substance and unity, and the latter with those of form and diversity. Greek polytheism

is not to be confounded with Pantheism. Before the Alexandrine period, when it was subjected to the corrosion of philosophic criticism, and as long as it preserved its originality, it neither admitted the existence of a God above nature, nor of a God confounded with nature. The world was to the Greek as a vast city, an assemblage of different beings, each divine, each also with its independent life and personality, and filling its own peculiar sphere.

Impressed from the beginning with the varied aspects of the world, he connoted all these varieties, and gave each its proper name. Thus, the sun was designated brilliant (*δῆλιος*), darting (*φοῖβος*) and burning (*φαέθων*); because it strode overhead, it was *Ὑπερίων*; because of its oblique course, *Λοξίας*. As born of light it was *λυκηγενής*; as putting darkness to flight, *Ἀπόλλων*; as the glory of the air, it was *Ἡρακλῆς*. As constant in its course, it was *Μέμνων*; as golden-faced, the head of the planetary system, it was *Κέφαλος*; as armed with a golden ray, *Χρυσάωρ*. As the divine shepherd leading his flock of sheep, the fleecy clouds, through the blue pastures of heaven, to the western cave of Latmos, where he would sink to sleep, whilst Selene bent over him and regarded him with love, he bore the name of *Ἐνδυμίων*.

Thus, the first religious conceptions of the Greek, the typical polytheist, are at the outset a devotion to natural phenomena. Every member of the Aryan family fell into the same mood.

In the Vedas, the sun has twenty different names, not pure equivalents, but each term descriptive of the sun in one of its aspects. It is brilliant (*Sûrya*), the friend (*Mitra*), generous (*Aryaman*), beneficent (*Bhaga*), that which nourishes (*Pûshan*), the Creator (*Tvashtar*), the master of the

sky (Divaspati), and so on ; as in Scandinavia it is Sol the shining, Baldr the beautiful, and Frey the master.

At the time when man created all these epithets, he had no fear of being misunderstood, for the same *naïf* passion filled every soul. But as soon as the first age of man had passed, the next epoch, perplexed by the number of names, and not understanding their significance, sought to reduce the confusion to order. It was supposed that these appellations could not all belong to the same objects, and Mitra was distinguished from Sûrya, Bhaga from Tvashtar, and Divaspati from Aryaman. Thus the one object of veneration was multiplied into a crowd of deities. We shall recur to this process in the following chapter.

Every form of polytheism is sprung from nature-worship, or the concentration of force in material objects. In Persia, the blazing sun was adored as Ormuzd, and altars smoked perpetually in honour of fire. In the bleak North, the Norseman called on Odin, the stormy, and Thorr, the thunderer, and Loki, flame. In Gaul and Britain pillars were raised to the sun, altars to the moon, and fire was heaped under sacrificial caldrons to Ceridwen, the earth goddess.

But as civilization advanced, men's ideas underwent modification. The religious idea wrapped in the shell of naturalism lay like a gland on the earth. The sun of prosperity shone on it ; the dew of intelligence moistened it ; the germ of life burst the hard casing which had imprisoned it, and became a vital religion, flowering in polytheism, fruiting into monotheism. The laws governing that nature which had been ignorantly worshipped were observed, and the gods ceased to be material objects, and were transformed into governing principles.

From physical laws men advanced to moral laws, and, when the world of morals was invaded by men, they enthroned their gods above it. Humanity before religious truth acted like a painter sketching from nature. It began by blotting in the subject in rude masses of light and shade. Slowly the details were elaborated; the chiaroscuro gave each object its relative position, and the parts were blended by a common tint.

As man grew wiser he grew more grave, and his deities reflected his mood. The Hellenic gods moved from the physical to the metaphysical, and from that into the moral sphere. Zeus was originally the sky that fertilizes the earth and quickens nature. Clothed in swan garb of feathery cirrus, it approaches and overshadows Leda; in a shower of vernal rain it impregnates Danaë, the earth fettered in frosty chains.

So far the physical Zeus. In his metaphysical acceptance he became the law and harmony of the universe; and in his moral aspect he was the principle of justice, the source of good, the All-holy. In like manner, Athene, who sprang from the head of Zeus, was the heavenly fire striking with its lightning spear, and whirling the cloudy ægis; but in later times Pallas Athene was regarded as divine wisdom.

As soon as agriculture assumed a prominent position in the social economy, the observation and knowledge of the heavens became a necessity. The sidereal vault was the great farmer's-kalendar, and the operations of agriculture were governed by the motions of the heavenly bodies. The march of the sun, in its annual revolution, and the phases of the moon, formed the rough distribution of time to a rude people. But these observations were incomplete and truncated, and resulted in the creation of a year of ten

lunar months, of which five were summer and five were winter months. The number was increased to twelve when it was seen that certain groups of stars appeared and disappeared in fixed succession, and returned to the same situations above the horizon at the same periods. As soon as this was discovered, these groups of stars were given names. The recommencement of agricultural operations and the heliatic rising and setting of certain constellations were associated together, and the names and forms of the terrestrial objects brought into prominence at the rising of these constellations were applied to the clusters of stars. The sign of the bull indicated the month when the plough was driven through the soil; the lion pointed out the time when that animal, driven by the summer heat from its deserts, appeared near the rivers and brought destruction on the flocks; the constellation of the ear, or of the reaping virgin, fixed the time for gathering in the harvest, and the serpent that when the floods rose and wound among the pastures; and the symbol of the water-bearer told when the winter downfall of rain reached its climax. The mind of man, having once entered on this course, did not remain stationary. Soon the whole of the celestial sphere was covered with hieroglyphs of men and beasts and objects of every description, intended at first to announce to agriculturists the precise date at which certain phenomena were to take place, which would affect their labours in a manner more or less special. After a while, this system, inculcated on the mind by civil and religious education, for public utility, became sacred; and came to be regarded as reposing on incontestable truth, and was explained by myths. As the sun traversed the constellations it was said to be transformed. Osiris and Çiva were related to have been metamorphosed into bulls; the same was told of Zeus, and as

in that month the earth was fecundated by the early rains and warm sunbeams, strange tales arose of the union of the god with an Io, Isis, or Europa. Vishnu, for the benefit of man, was said to have taken at one time the form of a fish, then of a boar, a tortoise, a lion-headed man, and a dwarf, all symbols of zodiacal signs. Thus also are to be explained the Egyptian gods with heads of crocodiles, hawks, and dogs, and of sphinxes—figures of the Nile flood, occurring between the signs of the lion and the virgin.

From this observation of the planets and constellations arose the astrolatry of the Chaldeans, and the astrology of ancient and mediæval times. "The ancient astrologers," says Maimonides, "having consecrated to each planet a colour, an animal, a piece of wood formed in a special manner, a metal, a fruit, a plant, formed of all these things a figure or representation of the star, observing for this purpose the proper instant, and a lucky day, a right conjunction, or any other aspect regarded as favourable. By magical ceremonies, they thought to make the influence of the superior beings pass into these figures or idols. Such were the idols adored by the Chaldee-Sabæans. In the worship tendered to them, the priest wore the colours proper to the symbolized planet. By these means the astrologers and magicians succeeded in passing themselves off as the dispensers of celestial favours. As the early peoples were all agriculturists, they persuaded them that they had the power to dispose of rains and all the good things of the seasons. Consequently agriculture was carried on subject to astrologic rites, and the priests made talismans, and inaugurated processions to draw down upon the harvests the salutary influences of the celestial virtues, and to drive far off all maleficent influences."¹

¹ Renand : *Nouvelle Symbolique*, p. 35 ; Bruxelles, 1861.

A world of deities analogous to the world of men was in like manner arranged into states, of which one became the head to whom the others were subordinated. Two empires were always represented, one of light, the other of darkness—one of life, the other of death—and afterwards morally contrasted as realms of good and of evil. The kingdom of light was subdivided according to the elemental divisions, and there were air, earth, and water deities; the air gods were of heavenly nature and disposition, those of the earth approached in character the gods of the nether world, but were nevertheless members of the heavenly kingdom. But this classification was the work of a later date, and was arbitrary, and often inexact. The moon goddess is made an earth goddess, and the god of the skies is precipitated into the sea, where he inaugurates a watery kingdom.

In the following chapter we shall see some farther developments of Polytheism.

The origin and modification in religious belief is due to the sense of man's physical weakness, his mental weakness, and his moral weakness.

At first he was only conscious of physical inferiority; and then his gods were his superiors in brute force alone: when his intellect grew, he felt how unequal it was to grasp the laws of nature, and then the gods were treated as his superiors in wisdom and understanding.

At last his moral consciousness awakened, and with it a consciousness of sin; then he raised his gods to an altitude of moral holiness and purity which he himself despaired to reach.

Thus, if it be true that man is made in the image of God, it is also true that the gods man worships are images of himself, but larger, mightier, wiser, better. God is the superlative of man the positive.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ORIGIN OF MYTHOLOGY

Mythology not the invention of priests—Confusion in myths—The causes of the rise of myth : 1. Forgetfulness of the signification of words ; 2. Confusion arising from words having several meanings ; 3. Accumulation of similitudes ; 4. Philological attempts to explain the significance of words that are antiquated ; 5. Allegories misunderstood ; 6. Attempts to account for natural curiosities—Brotomorphosis or Euhemerism.

WE are greatly mistaken if we suppose that religion was the invention of priests, as was taught by the philosophers of the last century. These men supposed that the religious systems, the theogonies and mythologies of antiquity, were designedly constructed to deceive mankind, and bring it fettered to the foot of the priest. But this doctrine is wholly devoid of substantial proof. Religion is the spontaneous outgrowth of human nature ; and as far back as one can trace the history of theodoxy, one finds the sacerdotal classes sharing with the laity those fundamental notions which form the essence of popular religion. The priest believed what was believed by the mass of the nation ; he believed with greater exaltation, enthusiasm, and fanaticism, and in that lay his power.

In the formation of the primitive myths there was no premeditation ; those who created them were guided by

impulses acting upon all alike, and were, in fact, but the mouthpiece of popular opinion. Mythology rests, not on individual conception, but on a conception common to a nation or to a religious community. Each adds his trifle, and the myth, embellished now by one narrator, now by another, rolls down centuries, gathering accretions insensibly, like a snowball. Consequently, myths are very varied. There is scarcely a Greek myth, for instance, which is not found in numerous variations; and this want of uniformity is not due to poets, but to the popular belief which the poets followed.

For instance, the same goddess is given to a god, now as a wife, and now a sister, and in another version she appears as his mother. This happened through the retention of the same name for a changing goddess; but if she has several names, she becomes several different persons. So the predicates of gods appear as divine personages, and unite with them again: thus, Nike appears beside Athene, and Themis beside the Earth.

If we classify the forces at work in the mythopœic age, we shall find them to be as follow:¹—

1. Language, at an early period of the history of mankind, was full of sap. Its superabundant vigour exhibited itself in prodigality of terminology in the designation of a single object, and in a surprising profusion of synonyms. Instances have been given in the preceding chapter. These names, when their signification was clouded, became each a distinct deity. Nevertheless, since all these figures had among them an appearance of relationship, they were reduced to theogony, and were grouped into a family. All

¹ The arrangement of M. Bréal has been followed, with, however, some important additions: (*Hercule et Cacus*, pp. 7-20).

the epithets which had, through misconception of their meaning, consolidated into proper names, and which were floating purposeless in the popular mythology, were gathered, and artificially arranged into a system which overlapped history and disturbed chronology.

But this was not all. A reason had to be given why the supreme god was called first by one name and then by another. As it was supposed that these names must belong to distinct beings, celestial dynasties were invented, and revolutions in heaven; Ouranos yielded his throne to Kronos, and Kronos was displaced by Zeus. The past was filled with imaginary cataclysms, by placing in it the old worn-out titles of the actual divinities, as personal gods who had abdicated, or had been driven out of power by newer and more vigorous deities.

In the time of Homer, the work of classification and co-ordination was tolerably complete in Greece. Hesiod gives the gods and all fabulous beings their genealogies. The Titans are distinguished from the Giants, the Gorgon from Medusa. Typhœus by Echidna engenders Cerberus, Hydra, the Chimera, and Orthos, and by his own mother begets Sphinx. Thus, the same monster generates by himself. Many a myth arose out of this forgetfulness of the original identity of two or more divinities. Zeus is actually the same as Dionysus; the later being the *Δίος* worshipped at Nysos. Zeus was at one time named Tyndareus, the Thunderer, and it was said that the morning and evening twilights were the offspring of the sky and darkness. Leda is darkness, and may well be called the consort of the thundercloud. But afterwards it was fabled that Zeus had committed adultery with Leda, when the identity of Zeus and Tyndareus was forgotten.

The same deity entered mythology at different periods.

Aidoneus and Adonis are really one and the same. In a remote antiquity the Greeks adopted Adon, the Lord, of the Phœnicians, and made him master of the nether world. Afterwards they imported him again, with a story sufficiently varied to make the identity not immediately perceivable. Aidoneus and Adonis had the same wife, Persephone. When Osiris was shut into the coffer and cast into the river, he floated to Phœnicia, and was there received under the name of Adonis. Isis wandered in quest of him, came to Byblos, and seated herself by a fountain in silence and tears. She was then taken by the servants of the royal palace and made to attend on the young prince of the land. In like manner Demeter, after that Aidoneus had ravished her daughter, went in pursuit, reached Eleusis, seated herself by a well, conversed with the daughters of the queen, and became nurse to her son.¹ There are sufficient resemblances in the stories to make it probable that they are different versions of the same myth. Again, Persephone spends half the year with Aidoneus in the lower world, and half in the upper world: so Adonis divides his time between Persephone and Aphrodite.

2. A second cause of the formation of myths is the confusion arising from the different senses in which the same word was used. The sun with his golden rays was described as the golden-rayed. But the word 'hand' in Sanskrit is the same as the word 'ray.' When the same epithet was applied to Apollo or Indra, a myth would spring up, as we find it in German and Sanskrit mythology, telling us that Indra lost his hand, and that it was replaced by one made of gold. The story of the stables of Augias rests on a misprison. Augias is a surname of the sun. In Vaidic ter-

¹ Hom: Hymn in Cer. 97-120, 160 *et seq.*

minology the word *go* has two significations, cloud and cow; and *gotra* is both the sky and a stable. When this double sense was forgotten, and other words were used to designate cloud and sky, Augias was no longer regarded as the master of the cloud-strewn heaven, but as the proprietor of a cattle-stall. Apollo was said to be the son of $\Lambda\acute{\upsilon}\kappa\eta$, that is, of Light; but afterwards it was related that his mother was transformed into a wolf. Leto was represented at Tentyra as a cow, and a cow in Egyptian hieroglyph is the symbol for time. This rests on a phonetic resemblance, the words for cow and day being so slightly different that the distinction in their pronunciation is scarcely perceptible. Kadmus was the ancient Infinite God, and was symbolized by a dragon. The Phœnician word for teeth and years is the same, שנים; it is easy to see that from a misunderstanding, the fable of his sowing dragon's teeth, and of their springing up armed men, is nothing but a confused and burlesque rendering of the Oriental teaching that the Infinite God made articulate time, and that in process of time man was created.

Μῆλον has two significations, goat and apple. The tales of the quest of the golden fleece, and of the garden of the Hesperides, are possibly due to this fact. In Sanskrit, *bhî*, to fear, is the root of *bheka*, which is a cloud, so called because it causes fear, and also a frog, so called because of its timidity. An Indian story tells of a beautiful lady changed into a frog who sat by a well, and was found by a prince, who married her. She became his on condition that he should not show her water. He forgot the condition, and she disappeared. This tale is based on the truth that the cloud vanishes after the shower.

3. A third cause of the formation of myths is to be found

in the accumulation of similitudes descriptive of natural objects, which became an inexhaustible repertory of raw material of myth and legend. Comparison is the handmaid of nomenclature. The New Zealanders called the first horses that were imported big dogs; and the Kaffirs, on beholding a parasol for the first time, described it as a little cloud; for it is an instinct, if not a necessity, to borrow for the unknown the names already used for things known.¹ When the Israelites were given manna, they asked at once, "What is it?" and so with every man, whatever arrests his attention he inquires what it is, and satisfies himself by putting the new experience alongside of some old and similar experiences, and out of this comparison producing a name. Thus, a flame sadly puzzled Areios. He ran his thoughts over a series of resemblances, trying and rejecting each in turn; he called the flame a golden hand, a red beard, a yellow tooth. "By the Egyptians," said Herodotus, "fire has been held to be a living beast, devouring everything it can seize, and when filled with food it perishes with what it has devoured."² In 1521 Magellan discovered the Ladrone or Mariana Islands, and the circumstances are recorded by Antonio Pigafelta, one of his companions, in an interesting narrative, in which he minutely describes the manners of the natives. The islanders caused Magellan much annoyance by their thieving habits. They stole everything they could lay hands on, and at last the captain with forty men went on shore and set fire to one of their villages. A hundred and eighty years afterwards the Jesuit Father Le Gobien visited these people. "What is most astonishing," he says, "and what people will find it difficult to believe, is that they have never seen fire. This so

¹ Farrar : Chapters on Language, p. 119 ; 1866.

² Herod. iii. 16.

necessary element was entirely unknown to them. They neither knew its use nor its qualities; and they were never more surprised than when they saw it for the first time on the descent that Magellan made on one of their islands, where he burnt some fifty of their houses, to punish the natives for the trouble they had given him. They at first regarded the fire as a kind of animal, which attached itself to the wood on which it fed. The first who came too near it having burnt themselves frightened the rest, and only dared look at it from afar; for fear, they said, of being bitten by it, and lest this terrible animal should poison them with its breath.”¹

Old John of Brompton, in describing a waterspout, invests his account with a mythological character. He says: “Another remarkable thing is this, that took place during a certain month in the Gulf of Satalia (on the coast of Pamphylia). There appeared a great and black dragon which came in clouds, and let down his head into the water, whilst his tail seemed turned to the sky; and the dragon drew up the water to him by drinking, with such avidity, that if any ship, even though laden with men or any other heavy articles, had been near him when drinking, it would nevertheless have been sucked up and carried on high. In order, however, to avoid this danger, it is necessary, when people see it, at once to make an uproar, and to shout and hammer tables, so that the dragon, hearing the noise, and the voices of those shouting, may withdraw himself far off. Some people, however, assert that this is not a dragon, but the sun drawing up the waters of the sea; which seems more probable.”²

The clouds perplexed our primeval ancestor, Areios. He

¹ Le Gobien : *Histoire des Isles Marianes*, p. 44 ; Paris, 1700

² Apud Twysden : *Hist. Anglicæ Script.* x. 1216 ; 1652.

supposed them to be a shaggy fleece in which the sky wrapped itself when cold, or, when he saw them scudding before the wind, he said that they were horses; when they hung low and rounded, full with rain, he termed them udders; as they circled aloft, white and sunlit, on the blue sky, he thought they must be heavenly swans swimming on the great celestial lotus-pond.

So, too, Areios sought to explain the phenomenon of the sun by terrestrial analogies. It was a golden bird that died in fire and rose renovated from the flames; it was a wheel whirling in race through the sky; it was a blazing shield raised aloft, a golden bowl in which Helios sailed over the still heaven ocean; an egg laid by the red dawn; a golden flower that opened at morning; a face with streaming locks of light.

The stars were the myriad eyes of Argus, golden apples hanging on the world tree, chalices of light out of which the gods drank, diamonds strewing the great dark valley where night brooded over its luminous egg, the moon.

The moon was a silver boat in which a virgin queen sailed, it was a woman flying from the pursuit of the sun, a lamp, a mirror; diving under the sea, living under the waters half its time, it was a mermaid.

The thunder was the rumble of chariot-wheels, the roar of a mighty beast, the roll of a great skittle-ball, the banging of the heavenly door, the bray of an angelic trumpet.

The lightning was a serpent striking at its prey, a spear flung athwart the sky, a luminous fish darting in zigzags through the waters of heaven, a fiery scourge, the flashing of the divine eye, the outshot forked tongue of the tempest demon.

After a while, these rude analogies, thrown broadcast over the surface of man's impressionable self, by the vibra-

tion of religious speculation were thrown into heaps and arranged in patterns, and took shape as sacred myths. In the midst of an immense variety of myths gathered from all parts of the world, a recurrence of the same figures is observable. In them there is a fixed stock of picturesque material worked up into a thousand different forms, an endless variety of figures made out of the same legendary counters.

The cloud was at one time supposed to be a white winged horse; it was then associated with the sky god, an earth shaker, as he was called, when he thundered and whirled his lightning trident. When Areios first saw the sea reflecting the sky, he bid it reflect the sky-gods as well, and Poseidon, who was once the same as Zeus, became lord of the deep. And then the story was told, of his having struck the earth and produced a horse, as being drawn in a chariot by winged steeds, as having horses sacrificed on his altars, and as having transformed himself into a horse to enjoy the company of Ceres.

The little scarlet and golden fragments of cloud flying around the setting sun were once supposed to be birds of gorgeous plumage. At that time Memnon was the name of the sun; but when this fact was forgotten, it was fabled that from the funeral pyre of Memnon birds had risen.

This forgetfulness of the origin of mythic pictures, together with the tenacious hold upon them maintained by the popular mind, operated in the production of sacred rites of which priests and people could not explain the purport. At one time the cloud was called a goat's hide or fleece; and the cloud and wind were naturally associated together. But when at Tangara in Boeotia, on the festival of Hermes the wind-god, a youth carried a lamb about the town to avert plague, the reason of the ceremony was

obscure enough. We know that the sheepskin was an apotypome of the cloud, and thus the idea that without a rainfall disease would become prevalent assumed this grotesque expression by symbolic rite, the significance of which was but partially understood.

In like manner, at the beginning of dog-days, a procession ascended Pelion composed of noble youths clothed in goat-skins, and the object of this pilgrimage was to procure rain from Zeus Aktaios.

In the north of Europe, as in India, the clouds were identified with cows; but, when men had learned their mistake, they preserved a remembrance of their primitive notion, by investing the heavenly goddess Perchta with a cow's hide.

Through a profusion of imagery stored in the memories of the people a thread was run and bound into a mythologic rosary, over which man might pour forth the deepest aspirations of his soul.

4. A fourth cause of the formation of myths is to be sought in the philological attempts of a people ignorant of philology. When a word used in sacred rites and prayers has lost its meaning, if by hazard it resemble some word in common employment, it is derived from that word, and a story to account for the derivation is constructed. A curious modern illustration has come under my own notice. At Sessay Church, in Yorkshire, is the brass of a certain Thomas Magnus. The peasantry, not understanding Latin, have been puzzled over the name Magnus, and have accounted for it by a fable. They say that this Thomas was an orphan lad who was found in the church porch, and was educated by the farmers of the parish, and called by them Thomas "Amang-us," or among us.

The more absurd a story is that has been invented to account for a name, the more fondly people cling to it.

Among the American Indians an object of worship, and the centre of a cycle of legend, is Michabo, the Great Hare, or Rabbit. "From the remotest wilds of the north-west to the coast of the Atlantic, from the southern boundaries of Carolina to the cheerless swamps of Hudson's Bay, the Algonquins were never tired of gathering around the winter fire, and repeating the story of Manibozho or Michabo, the Great Hare. With entire unanimity their various branches, the Powhatans of Virginia, the Lenni-Lenape of the Delaware, the warlike hordes of New-England, the Ottawas of the far north, and the western tribes perhaps without exception, spoke of this 'chimerical beast,' as one of the old missionaries calls it, as their common ancestor."¹ Michabo is described as having been four-legged, monstrous; crouching on the face of the primeval waste of waters, with all his court composed of four-footed creatures around him, he formed the earth out of a grain of sand taken from the bottom of the ocean.²

It is strange that such an insignificant creature as a hare should have received this apotheosis; and it has been generally regarded as an instance of the senseless brute worship of savages. But its prevalence leads the mythologist to suspect that some confusion of words has led to a confusion of ideas, a suspicion which becomes a certainty when the name is analysed; for it is then found to be the Great White One, or Great Light, and to be in reality the sun, a fact of which the modern Indians are utterly unaware.³

¹ Brinton : *Myths of New World*, p. 162.

² Charlevoix : *Journal*, ii. 107 ; London, 1761. Atherne Jones : *Traditions of North American Indians*, ii. 43 ; London, 1830.

³ Brinton, p. 165.

In Greek theogony Athene is named *Τριτογένεια*, that is, the daughter of Tritos. But this deity had faded out of Hellenic mythology, though discoverable in the Vedas, as Trita, the ruler of the waters. Traces of this name remain in Triton, Tritopater, and Amphitrite. When the god Tritos was no longer known, the name *Τριτογένεια* became an enigma; and the Eolians, who in their dialect called the head *τριτώ*,¹ forged the story of Athene having sprung from the head of Zeus.² S. Renatus, according to his legend, was revived after having lain in his grave seven years, through the instrumentality of S. Maurilius. The story is palpably forged out of the name. Veronica is the Latinized form of Bernice: in this name was found a barbarous combination of Greek and Latin words, having the meaning of true-representation; sufficient substructure on which to rear a quaint legend which has left its impress on Catholic devotion to this day.

5. A fifth cause of the formation of myths is to be discovered in the allegorizing of poets and priests. Truths of natural and moral law were veiled in metaphor, and presented to the peoples in parables, the significance of which soon evaporated, leaving the story behind as an historic or sacred fact. The Romans personified and offered sacrifice to Fides, Victoria, Concordia, and Honor, and the Greeks to *Νίκη*, *Αἰδώς*, *Ἑλεος*, *Φόβος*, *Φήμη*, *Ὅρμη*, *Δίκη*, *Εἰρήνη*, *Τύχη*, *Πειθώ*, and the like. The story of Harmonia, the offspring of love and war, endowed with a vestment dyed in crime, is a manifest allegory; but to the people generally it was a religious truth. The story that Victory was the daughter of Pallas, Wisdom, and the sister of Strength and Valour, is transparent enough, yet she was no abstraction

¹ Aristoph. Nub. v. 989.

² Bréal, p. 17.

to the Greeks, or to Sylla, who raised a temple at Rome, and instituted sacrifices and festivals in her honour. When Marcellus erected two temples, one to Virtue and the other to Honour, so that to reach the latter the worshipper was obliged to pass through the former, the allegory was apparent; but it soon lost its significance, and the abstract qualities were invoked as personalities.

The mediæval parable of S. Christopher is so obviously allegorical that it is marvellous that popular obtuseness should have failed to discern the meaning at a glance. Yet that such was the case is evident from the fact of a day having been set apart in his honour, and of special hymns having found their way into the office books of the Church, *e.g.*:—

“ O sancte Christophore,
Qui portasti Jesum Christum
Per mare Rubrum,
Nec fraxisti crurum,
Et hoc est non mirum
Quia fuisti magnum virum.”

The uneducated and vulgar mind at once personifies what is absolute, and materializes what is abstract. If a philosophic idea be brought before it, it drags it to its own level, or rejects it altogether; if a truth be offered, such a mind distorts ere it receives it.

“ Die Eule siht bei Nacht, der Adler schaut in's Licht :
Thun beide, Wissenschaft und Andacht, Gleiches nicht ?
Von denen jede hat ihr eigenes Gebiet,
Das der geschieden hat, der Tag und Nacht einst shied.
Und wer vermischen will die zwei, was kommt heraus ?
Ein misslich Mittelding, der Dämmerung Fledermaus.”

6. The attempt to explain natural eccentricities has given birth to a number of myths. There is scarcely a rock of peculiar shape which has not a legend connected

with it to account for its shape. Natural water-worn hollows on stones are devil's footprints, or the hoof-marks of some phantom steed. The erratic boulders deposited by glacier or floating iceberg are said to have been cast by giant hands. The phenomenon of the drift is well known to modern geologists, but the ancients accounted for the stones scattered here and there by a myth. "Æschylus," says Strabo, "having perceived the difficulty of explaining how these stones came where they are, and having heard about them from some one else, wrested the whole matter into a myth."¹ In some lines preserved by Strabo, he related that Prometheus told Herakles that in combating with the Ligurians, if missiles failed him, and the soft earth did not yield him stones, Zeus, compassionating his defenceless state, would rain down a shower of boulders against his foes, which, strewn the ground, would excite the wonder of after ages.

Fossil remains have always excited the interest and speculation of the vulgar. In Siberia the carcasses of mammoths are found in gravel cliffs. To account for their presence underground, the natives suppose them to have been burrowing animals. In the Chinese Encyclopædia of Kang-hi is the following account:—"The cold is extreme and almost continual on the coast of the Northern Sea beyond the Tai-tong-Kiang; on this coast is found the animal Fen-shu, which resembles a rat in shape, but is as big as an elephant; it dwells in dark caverns, and ever shuns the light. There is got from it an ivory as white as that of the elephant, but easier to work, and not liable to split. Its flesh is very cold, and excellent for refreshing the blood." The ancient book "Shin-y-King" speaks of the animal in the following terms:—"There is

¹ Strabo, iv. 1, 7.

in the extreme north, among the snows and ice which cover this region, a *shu* (rat), which weighs up to a thousand pounds: its flesh is very good for those who are heated. The Tse-shu calls it Fen-shu, and speaks of another kind which is of less size. It is only," says this authority, "as large as a buffalo; it burrows like the moles, shuns the light, and almost always stays in its underground caves. It is said that it would die if it saw the light of the sun, or even of the moon."¹

The discovery of large fossil bones is the basis on which many a story of dragon and giant is founded. Those strewn over the Sewalik, or lowest ranges of the Himalayas, are said to have belonged to the gigantic Rakshasas of Indian mythology slain by Indra.² S. Augustine, in his chapter on the Lives and Sizes of the Antediluvians, says:—"Concerning the magnitude of their bodies, the graves laid bare by age or the force of rivers and various accidents, especially convict the incredulous where they have come to light, or where bones of the dead of incredible magnitude have fallen. I have seen, and not I alone, on the shore of Utica, so huge a molar tooth of a man, that were it cut up into small models of teeth like ours, it would seem enough to make a hundred of them. But this I should think had belonged to some giant, for beside that the bodies of all men were then much larger than ours, the giants again far exceeded the rest."³ Cieca de Leon, quoted by Garcilasso de la Vega,⁴ relates a tradition common among the natives of Manta, of giants who in former times landed on their shores and infested them. He adds, that large bones have been found which confirm the tradition. Waffer says:⁵—"It is

¹ Mém. concernant les Chinois, tome iv. p. 481.

² Tylor: Early Hist. of Mankind, p. 316.

³ S. Augustine: De Civitate Dei, xv. 9.

⁴ Lib. ix. c. 9.

⁵ Hist. Générale des Voyages, ed. Hol. xviii. 459.

a tradition of the country that in olden times there were giants in the environs of Mexico. I have seen there, when the Duke of Albuquerque was governor, some bones and teeth of a prodigious size; among others a tooth three inches across, and four inches long. The most intelligent people of the country suppose that the head must have measured no less than an ell in diameter."

The peculiarities of animals are accounted for by myth. The bear is stump-tailed because the fox cheated him out of his tail; the brown marks on the haddock are the fingerprints of S. Peter; the crossbill twisted its beak in attempting to wrench the nails from the hands of Christ. In the "Popol Vuh" of the Quiches is the following story: Two demigods, Hunahpu and Xbalanque, began to clear the forest and cultivate the land. The beasts did not approve of this, and at night they replaced the trees and shrubs that had been removed. Hunahpu and Xbalanque next night secreted themselves behind the felled timber, and awaited the coming on of the beasts. First came the lion and tiger; they leaped over the trees. Then came the stag and rabbit; the demigods caught them by their tails, and the animals fled, leaving their caudal appendages behind them, and to this day these creatures are destitute of tails. Next to be caught was the rat, whom the brothers Hunahpu and Xbalanque put in their handkerchief; they held him over a fire and singed his tail, and squeezed him so tight that his eyes nearly started out of his head, and thus ever after the rat's tail is hairless, and its eyes protrude.¹

Mythology is the systematization of myths. All myths are not religious myths, but no religion which has any hold on the affections and imaginations of men can be without

¹ Brasseur de Bourbourg: *Popol Vuh*, p. 125; Paris, 1861.

a mythology. The reduction of the floating beliefs and traditions to a system was the work of a later age, and then they were grouped into theogonies, cosmogonies, and eschatologies; that is, those relating to the gods, those relating to the origin of the world, and those relating to the fate of man and of the world. The change in the character of the gods from natural objects to physical forces, and then to moral governors, has been spoken of. During this progress, a number of myths which had been attached to divinities fell away and suffered brotomorphosis; that is, they were attributed to human historical personages. For many of the old stories told of the gods related how they had died, and when the incompatibility of mortality with divinity was perceived, the stories were associated with heroes, and thus formed a heroic cycle of mythology which has stamped itself on the great epic poems of the world. The mighty deeds of the gods became those of great warriors or benefactors of the race, but their divine origin was recognised by making them the offspring of deities. Among the Greeks, Helena, Achilles, Perseus, Danaë, Bellerophon, Herakles, &c.; among the Germans, Sigfried, Gunther, Hagen, Wieland, Kriemhild, and others; among the Kelts, Arthur, Uther, Pendragon, Merlin; the Indian heroes of the "*Mahâbhârata*," the Persian heroes of the "*Shah-nameh*," the Scandinavian heroes of the "*Edda*;" the Finnish Wainamoinen, Ilmarinen, Lemikainen of the "*Kalewala*;" the Esthonian sons of Kalew of the "*Kalewipoeg*;" the Hunahpu and Xbalanque of the Quiche "*Popol Vuh*," &c., are all ancient gods who have become heroes when the popular opinion forbade the gods to be mortal.

Euhemerus wrote a history of the gods, in which he pretended to prove, by the help of forged inscriptions, that

they had all been on earth and had been mortals whom men had deified. In like manner Snorro Sturlason set Odin down in his history, as the first king of the Norsemen; and Saxo Grammaticus has introduced the whole theogony of Scandinavian mythology into his pedigree of the Danish kings. The account of Ragnarok, the Twilight of the gods, passed from sacred eschatology into the domain of chivalrous romance; and in the verses of the *Trouvères* the defeat of Roncevaux recalls most of the features of the final crash of the universe described by the Scandinavian Vala.

CHAPTER IX

IDOLATRY

Idolatry, the worship of a person or object—Forms assumed by idolatry :
 1. Fetishism—The philosophy of Fetishism—Obligations owed by humanity to Fetishism—Defect in Fetishism ; 2. Symbolism—All expressions of ideas are symbolic—Symbolic writing—Symbolic gesture—Symbolic language—Obligations due to symbolism—Defect in symbolism ; 3. Ideolatry—Anthropomorphism.

IDOLATRY is the adoration (*λατρεία*) of a presentation (*εἰδωλον*), that presentation being either sensible or ideal. The formation of *εἰδωλα* is a law of our nature. Every term we employ is taken from material images, and every notion we form is moulded on sensible perceptions. If an idea be divested of every concretion, it ceases to be conceivable. Thought and language are alike finite, and it is impossible to build up ideas, except with materials already collected by our senses ; and these the imagination breaks up, arranges, and pieces together anew. In the wildest play of fancy, every ingredient has at former times been taken up, either through the perception or through internal presentation, and the formation of the image is the—perhaps incongruous—fusion of material turned out of the storehouse of memory. We can imagine Pegasus, not because we have seen such a creature, but we have seen horses and also birds' wings, and these we combine ideally.

Abstract ideas are merely idols less wooden than concrete ideas. The very terms made use of to denote those ideas farthest removed from sensible associations were once as picturesque and material as those expressive of concretions, but cultivated thought makes allowance for these deficiencies, strips them of their picturesqueness, and sublimates their materialism.

"Our mind," says Boyle, "makes us think and speak after the manner of true and positive beings of such things as are chimerical, and some of them negations and privations themselves, as death, ignorance, blindness, and the like."

When we say, "Virtue is its own reward," the whole phrase is intensely anthropomorphic; we give virtue personality, a power of action, and a sense of gratification.

The more abstract or general a term is, the less precise is the image mentally accompanying it. In the series, Animal, Man, Frenchman, Parisian, the idea becomes gradually more clear as the range is narrowed.

When the mind conceives an idea of God, that idea is an image more or less distinct proportionately to the personality with which the idea is invested. The idea of an impersonal God is inconceivable. One idea may be less personal than another idea, but that is all. The savage forms a grosser notion of the Deity than the European peasant, and the notion of the peasant is grosser than that of the philosopher. The difference is one of degree.

The Articles of the English Church forbid us to hold that God has parts and passions like ourselves; but if He is to be worshipped, every prayer must be a departure from this injunction. The Christian missionary differs from the heathen in this particular: his God is a mental image, and that of the heathen is a material image.

The Jew was strictly forbidden to make any graven representation of Jehovah; but in the Hebrew Scriptures He was anthropomorphised through the exigencies of thought and language. The Anglican Article which declares that God has neither parts nor passions, adds that He has wisdom and goodness. Man is not a body only, he has mind and dispositions as well; and the attribution to the Deity of wisdom and goodness is every whit as much anthropomorphosis as the attribution of limbs and passions.

Prayer supposes two factors, man and God: man the subject, God the object. Now the object must be either sensibly or ideally presented, or prayer becomes impossible. If sensibly objected, man worships a fetish, or an artistic image; if ideally objected, he forms in his brain at the moment of prayer a transitory image, which if cut in wood or stone would be permanent. But, inasmuch as only physical existence can be represented artistically, image-worship may become prejudicial to man's religious progress, by restraining him from spiritual idolatry.

The object may be also verbally expressed, and the formation of a sacred name is a process analogous to the formation of a sacred image. Thus onomatolatry is the equivalent of idolatry.

I am conscious of an idea of God. I desire to object it. I do so in one of two ways, which is determined by the mode of writing with which I am familiar. At the present time in Europe the system is phonetic; of old it was pictographic. I write GOD, and in so doing my mind undergoes the following processes. I give to the idea a sound conventionally assumed to express that idea. I then resolve that sound into its phonetic ingredients; to each vocal sound a character has been conventionally assigned. These

signs I arrange in a conventional order from left to right, and thus the thought finds expression. The primitive mode of writing—that out of which, by a series of modifications, the characters traced by my pen have been elaborated—was pictorial, and the process simple. A desire was felt by man to fix his evanescent thoughts, and transmit them to others. For this purpose he employed figures of men, animals, and various objects. No intermediary effort was required between the act of perception and the act of interpretation. The idea of water, for instance, expressed by wavy lines, was received at once, with the utmost rapidity, because the sign bears, in its constituted features, an effective representation of that to which the sign calls attention.

An idol was the plastic expression of the idea of God and of His attributes, each of which was represented by some peculiar sign, to describe which we should employ a certain number of letters of the alphabet arranged in a definite order.

Idolatry, then, is the outward expression of the belief in a personal God. The formation of the idea of a personal God is, and must be, the making of an image, though not necessarily of a graven image.

Idolatry exists in three forms: 1. Fetishism; 2. Symbolism; 3. Ideolatry. Each of these forms shall be considered in succession.

1. FETISHISM.

“When a Schaman is aware that I have no household god,” said a Samoyed to M. Castrén, the linguist, “he comes to me, and I give him a squirrel or an ermine skin. Then he goes away, and comes back with the skin moulded

into a human shape, and dressed in such clothes as we wear. When the Los is sewn and dressed, I lay it in a basket, and bring it into a store chamber . . . and when I want help of the Los in any matter, either in hunting, or fishing, or in sickness, then I bring it an offering, consisting of skins, or ribands, or beads, which is laid in the basket.”¹ This Los is a fetish; it is not yet altogether an idol, it is a spirit entangled in a material object: what that object is matters little; a stump of a tree, a stone, a rag, or an animal, serves the purpose of condensing the impalpable deity into a tangible reality.

Through this coarse superstition glimmers an intelligent conception. It is that of an all-pervading Deity, who is focussed, so to speak, in the fetish. This deity is called Num. “I have heard some Samoyeds declare that the earth, the sea—all nature, in short—are Num.”² “Where is Num?” asked Castrén of a Samoyed, and the man pointed to the blue sea; but an old woman told him that the sun was Num.³

The Scithas worshipped by the Lapps had no certain figure or shape formed by nature or art; they were either trees or rough stones, much worn by water. Tornæus says that they were often mere tree stumps with the roots upwards.⁴ The Papuans believe in a mysterious Power or Force above them which is diffused throughout nature; and selecting some form in which they suppose this power to be peculiarly active, they regard it as their guardian deity. Such a fetish is at one time a rude piece of sculpture, as a snake, a lizard, or some other reptile; at another time it is

¹ Castrén : *Reiseberichte*, ii. 170 ; St. Petersburg, 1856.

² *Ibid.* i. 198.

³ Castrén : *Finnische Mythologie*, p. 16 ; St. Petersburg, 1853.

⁴ Scheffer : *Lapland*, p. 106 ; London, 1704.

a bit of bone or mineral; at a third it rises to the dignity of a human figure, small and distorted and hideous. In Papua also the waringin tree is an object of devotion, and is regarded with veneration as a plant in which the diffused spirit is most intensely concentrated. The Vata tree has, in like manner, been worshipped in India from a remote antiquity; beneath its shadow the ascetic has wasted his life in striving after absorption into Brahma, and on it poets and philosophers have expended the highest praise.

Among the red-skins uncouth stones and trees have received a like religious homage. The Dahcotas honour large rocks as their ancestors.¹ The fetishes of the Iroquois consist in knives, plants, bones, feathers, shells, pipes, stones, beasts. Anything of which an Indian dreams and with which his dream associates power, is to him at once a fetish. It is the same with the negroes. They will adore a bundle of rags or a tuft of straw, an old hat or a rusty nail. The absence of forms of public worship and of images among the Kaffirs and Bechuanas has caused them to be regarded as atheists; yet, says Dr. Livingstone, "they all possess a distinct knowledge of a deity, and of a future state; but they show so little reverence, and feel so little connexion with either, that it is not surprising that some have supposed them entirely ignorant on the subject."² That is to say, they have the intelligence to conceive God, but not the imaginative faculty to depict Him, nor the inductive faculty by means of which to apply the conception. To men of this low imaginative temperament, a fetish is a religious necessity.

A fetish must be distinguished from an idol. Idols are

¹ Schoolcraft: *Tribes*, &c. ii. 196.

² Livingstone: *Exploration*, &c. p. 158.

symbols, and are often treated as fetishes, but fetishes are not always idols.

The idol is a likeness, a representation more or less exact of an idea. But a fetish is a concentration of spirit or deity upon one point.

There is nothing necessarily superstitious in fetishism, for it is merely the religious application of an observable general law—the law (1) that forces act from centres, that power is gathered up at special points, and (2) that objects may possess values not physically appreciable.

The world has its centre of gravity; it revolves also around a centre of attraction, the sun, which with all its planetary system is sweeping at the rate of some 150 millions of miles per year round an invisible point in the Pleiades, which may also be moving in an orbit around some other point. Light is not diffused equally everywhere, but is collected in foci, like the sun—

“Made porous to receive
And drink the liquid light, firm to retain
Her gathered beams, great palace now of light.”¹

Life and force in plants and animals radiate from centres. The spores and eggs of organized life are so many points at which vital energy is gathered up for transmission.

When a man makes a fetish he acts on the supposition that in the spiritual world the mode of operation is analogous to that experimentally known in the material world. He seeks a centre for spiritual essence, towards which he can direct his worship, and to which he can nail his wandering thoughts. In a word, he follows a natural impulse. The principle on which he argues is just, but the manner

¹ *Paradise Lost*, vii. 361-3.

of expression may be false and ludicrous, as when the negro concentrates his god in a bundle of tatters.

The principle of fetishism is, as has already been said, that of centralization, and also of attribution of fictitious value to some object of no demonstrable importance. Thus it underlies a series of religious acts, commercial speculations, and political systems.

In religion every temple and shrine and priest is a recognition of fetishism; a recognition that certain spots and certain persons are more sacred than other spots and persons.

It is the same in commerce. I take a scrap of note-paper and write on it a draft for a thousand pounds. Ostensibly the scrap is nothing but paper covered with scrawls of ink. I can tear it up and burn it. But it has a fictitious value, and is equivalent to one thousand sovereigns in specie. If I write on the paper a name not my own I shall be transported; but what *is* that name written which will destroy my happiness? It is actually a few strokes of a pen dipped in ink.

The cheque is in commerce what the fetish is in religion; it is that which is supposed virtually to be more than what it is sensibly. The Host is held by the Catholic to have acquired a fictitious value by the act of consecration; that is, in it is gathered up and centred Divine power to operate spiritually, just as in the sun it is gathered up and centred, to act luminously, calorically, and attractively.

It is the same in society and politics. The principle of fetishism is admitted on all sides. What is a king but a political fetish? Really, he is an individual of the species *Homo*, of the genus *Mammal*. He is an organized being in every physical particular, like any other member of his species. The natural processes of assimilation and

secretion in him in no way differ from those of his subjects—

“Expende Hannibalem : quot libras in duce summo
Invenies ?”¹

The king and the general are alike so many pounds of phosphate of lime. And yet, by common consent of the public, a special power is allowed to reside in the king, and special authority in the general.

We are prone to regard fetishism as religion at its lowest term, but we are mistaken. The Christian who takes off his hat on entering church, and bows at the sacred Name in the Creed; the soldier who sacrifices his life to defend the royal standard; the sailor who touches his cap to the quarter-deck; the minister of state who bows to the throne; the capitalist who locks up a bundle of dirty bank-notes in a patent safe; the lover who cherishes a lock of his mistress's hair,—are fetishists as truly as the negro and red-skin: but they differ from the negro and red-skin in this, that their belief is not fetishism only, but fetishism *plus* a number of other isms.

It may be objected that some of these acts are symbolical. That, for instance, the nobleman who bows to the throne does so as a sign of reverence to royalty; but if a throne be taken to represent royalty, and receive the homage due to royalty, it must be, at the moment, regarded as a fetish of royalty. The Catholic bows before the image of the Blessed Virgin, and the son reverently kisses his mother's portrait on the same principle. In both cases the act is supposed to transmit to the original the reverence of the worshipper or of the child; and for that purpose the object becomes, for the moment, a fetish.

¹ Juvenal : Sat. x. 147.

The worship of an image bearing some resemblance to the human form is justly regarded as an advance on the worship of a tuft of feathers; not that it indicates emergence from fetishism, but that it shows the development of symbolism alongside of fetishism.

To fetishism humanity owes immense obligations, as has been justly pointed out by Comte. The domestication of animals and plants is the basis of agriculture, the most essential of all branches of industry. The voluntary association of the useful species of animals with man is due to the fraternal love and reverence of an age of fetishism. If the horse or the dog were now to withdraw itself from human domination, it would be all but impossible to recover it. This precious alliance, the source of so much industrial and military success, was the spontaneous institution of an age when fetishism prevailed, and is the result of the universal adoration instituted by the primitive religion. Although this worship rarely extended to a whole species, and did not embrace all races, its habitual exercise sufficed to inspire towards all animals those dispositions most favourable for the maintenance of worthy inter-relation. This piety towards animals and plants has left its traces in religions which have developed out of primitive fetishism; in sacred rites and myths turning upon some useful plant or domesticated animal. Corn, wine, and oil are employed in religious ceremonial in East and West; the horse, the dog, and the cow were long revered as the companions, and not the mere drudges of mankind. A sense of justice underlies this religious treatment of organisms which conduce to man's happiness.

The devotion of the Papuan to the waringin tree, of the Otaheite islander to the bread-fruit tree, of the Mexican to

the maize plant, of the Eastern to the palm ; nay more, the sacred employment of wheat flour and wine as Eucharistic symbols in the Church, are beautiful and appropriate recognitions by man of the debt of gratitude due to these fruits of the earth. The sacred books of the Parsees are full of reminiscences of the respect borne by the primeval Iranian to the dog:—

“Creator ! What is the penalty for him who wounds a cattle-dog dangerously, so that its living power is weakened ? And Ahura-Mazda answered : Eight hundred blows with the horse-goad, and eight hundred with the *graoshô-charana*.

“Creator ! What is the penalty for him who wounds a village-dog dangerously, so that its living power is weakened ? And Ahura-Mazda answered : Seven hundred blows with the horse-goad, and seven hundred with the *graoshô-charana*.

“Creator ! What amount of sin does he contract who gives insufficient food to a cattle-dog ? And Ahura-Mazda answered : The same amount of sin as if he had given bad food to the master of an illustrious house in the material world.

“Creator ! What amount of sin does he contract who gives insufficient food to a street-dog ? And Ahura-Mazda answered : The same amount of sin as if he had given bad food to the master of a second-rate house in the material world.

“Creator ! What amount of sin does he contract who gives bad food to a puppy ? And Ahura-Mazda answered : The same amount of sin as if he had injured, by giving bad food, a human child.

“I, Ahura-Mazda, I have created the dog, clothed him, and shod him. When he is well and by thy hearth, then

the thief and the wolf will not come nigh thy village, and rob thee of thy goods."¹

The domestication of animals is the product of ages of kindness and love and reverence. The age of fetishism laboured to conciliate the horse and the dog and the cow, and we enter upon its labours. "Notwithstanding the exaggeration inseparable from all absolute belief," says M. Comte, "fetishism was eminently favourable to our practical evolutions, by determining spontaneously, first the conservation and then the association of the disciplinable animals. Without having been as sensible, nor as complete, towards the useful vegetables, its salutary influence long remained as indispensable to agricultural experiment. This double aptitude belongs directly to fetishist dogma, independent of the sacerdotal impulsion which afterwards slowly regularized it; whilst monotheism, so boasted, owed its utility solely to the continued wisdom of a progressive priesthood."²

The defect in fetishism is its adaptability to necromancy and devilry, which is a form of religion, or rather a superstition, injurious to human progress. Charms and word amulets are applications of the principle of fetishism. When a witch makes a wax heart and stabs it, she supposes that heart to be not the symbol merely, but the fetish of the heart of her enemy. In the Pacific Islands a few cocoa-nut leaves plaited into the form of a shark will scare trespassers from a plantation, for they suppose that the disregard of the *tabu* will entail destruction by the real shark. In Kamschatka, when something has been stolen and the thief cannot be discovered, they throw nerves or

¹ Vendidad, Fargard xiii. verses 36-41, 55-58, 106, 111-113.

² Comte : *Politique Positive*, tome iii. p. 105 ; Paris, 1853.

sinews into the fire; and as they shrink and wriggle in the heat, the like is believed to happen to the body of the thief."¹

Magic is the shadow of religion, and the instincts of humanity have in all ages pronounced against sorcery. The deprecation of demons acts like fatalism in paralysing the power of progress. He who sees in every natural catastrophe the freak of a malignant spirit, instead of providing against a recurrence of the catastrophe, labours to satisfy the evil spirit with sacrificial horrors. The Siberian nomad, the American Indian, and the African negro, prostrated at their birth by a craven fear of Loses, Okies, and Obies, have licked the dust from generation to generation.

2. SYMBOLISM.

The principal use of images to a savage is to give definite personality to a vague idea, such as could hardly be grasped without material aid. An illustration in a book serves a civilized man the same purpose. Among the North American tribes, a mother who has lost a child puts a bundle of feathers or grass into its cradle; and in Africa the negroes employ a doll for the same purpose. Among the Ostyaks, when a man dies, a rude wooden image of the dead man is set up and is caressed by the widow. A nine-pin serves a little child as a baby, and is by it nursed and addressed with affection. In each of these instances the *εἶδωλον* a symbol, not a fetish. It is a representation of something not visible. If, however, that image be supposed to be invested with a portion of the essence of that which it represents, it at once becomes a fetish as well.

The Egyptians set up figures of Pascht the lion-headed,

¹ Kracheninnikow : Deser. du Kamtchatka, p. 22 ; Paris, 1768.

the avenger of crime, at the junction of main roads, as reminders to the people of the retribution awaiting wrong-dealing. In a Catholic country the crucifix or a sacred image occupies an analogous position, and the purpose is not different. In the fields, from a waving sea of glistening maize-sheaths, with their flickering tassels of flower, rises a wooden cross, set up by the old farmer and his sturdy sons to consecrate their work, and to be to them a constant reminder, as they toil with pick and spade, of Him who died for them.

“ Hard by the wayside I found a cross,
That made me breathe a prayer upon the spot,
While Nature of herself, as if to trace
The emblem's use, had trailed around its base
The blue significant forget-me-not.
Methought, the claims of Charity to urge
More forcibly, along with Faith and Hope,
The pious choice had pitched upon the verge
Of a delicious slope,
Giving the eye much variegated scope ;
' Look round,' it whispered, ' on that prospect rare,
Those vales so verdant, and those hills so blue ;
Enjoy the sunny world, so fresh and fair,
But'—(how the simple legend pierced me through !)
' Priez pour les Malheureux.' ”¹

In like manner all idols are symbols ; fetishes they also may be. If a man were born devoid of every sense except smell, in order to convey ideas to his brain a gamut of odours would have to be employed. And this series of odours would be the vocabulary of ideas addressed to him through his nose. The smell of sulphuretted hydrogen might be taken to express evil ; that of the rose to denote good ; certain odours would represent food, others drink. The scent of the poppy might symbolize sleep ; that of

¹ Hood : Ode to Rae Wilson.

vinegar ill-humour, and so on. Each of these instruments would provoke an idea. If a man has eyes, another series of methods is attainable for arousing thought—pictures and words. If the man be deaf, phonetic-writing is clumsy and irrational, whilst picture-writing is simple and easily intelligible. To the man with only the sense of smell, sulphuretted hydrogen is the symbol of evil; to the man who can hear and see, the word Evil or a pictured fiend produces the corresponding idea. In Mexico and in Peru, in Egypt and in India, multitudes of diminutive images of deities are daily discovered. These were the symbols of gods carried about by private individuals as constant reminders of the unseen and of his attributes, and to them were the equivalents of the inscriptions on the phylacteries of the Jews, and the duodecimo Bibles of Protestants.

Among the red-skins picture-writing is universal. They represent a man who is bewitched by two lines drawn from his head to his heart; a scholar by two lines uniting his ears with his heart. The impatience of love is symbolized by a winged man; a dreamer, by a figure asleep, with lines drawn towards the ear. A doctor's emblem is a plant with human legs; that of a rain-enchanter is a vessel of water with the limbs of a man.

In Freycinet and Arago's "*Voyage to the Eastern Ocean*," we are told that a native of the Carolina Islands, who wished to exchange some shells with a trader at Botta for some axes and other articles, sent him a letter expressing his desire, which was couched in symbolic characters. The figure of a man at the top of the paper represented the captain who was to convey the letter. The arms of this figure were outstretched, to show that he was the messenger between two parties; horns on his head denoted his dignity as captain. In the left column were drawn the shells in

the number sent, and in the right column the things desired in exchange.

An idea may also be conveyed by gesture. Thus Josephine Beauharnais was informed of the execution of Robespierre by a woman in the street below the prison putting stones in her apron, and then, with her hand falling on them, scattering them on the ground. To put the forefinger against the closed lips is significant of silence; a shrug of the shoulders expresses contempt. Jean Valjean, when thrown into prison for having stolen a loaf of bread to feed a family of children, sitting in the yard, is described by Victor Hugo as passing his hand in the air by a series of drops to the level of his knee. The act symbolized the number of little heads, and their relative heights, for which the deed was done.

The mode of expression of a religious idea is by image worship. The image is the symbol of the object worshipped, and the ceremonial act is the symbol of the subjective relation to that object. Thus, to bow the knee and incline the head is a symbolic act, expressing the feeling of reverence in the heart of the devotee. To extend the hand to a friend is a symbolic act of amity; to remove the hat to an acquaintance expresses regard; to wink conveys an idea of secrecy. As symbolic acts are of common and almost necessary employment in society, in religion they naturally assume prominence. Ceremonial is the expression of the religious sentiment by bodily and manual acts, and prayer is the utterance of the same sentiment by a vocal act, and one is just as reasonable as the other. The mind forms an idea, and exhibits it by setting in operation either the muscles of the throat, or, say, the muscles of the knee.

Idols, then, are symbols of ideas. The Assyrian imagined

his god to be wise, ubiquitous, and powerful. He therefore represented him with human head, with wings, and with the body of a bull or lion. The sacred animals of the Egyptians were living symbols; the scarabæus, which was supposed to be monogamic, was the emblem of the sun as generator, the cat of the moon, and the ibis of the winds. The duck was the sign of *Sev*, time, because the name was the same for both.

The Hindu represents Brahm, the Great Absolute, absorbed in self-contemplation, as a man wrapped in a mantle, with his foot in his mouth, to symbolize his eternity and his self-satisfaction; or as a globose figure, with a crown of cloud and flame, his eyes water-lilies (types of the sun), winds proceeding from his mouth, one hand holding the chalice of rains, another the pearl chain of the concatenation of creation, another an inscribed palm-leaf representing the Vedas, and the fourth Vishnu's fiery wheel and cross, an emblem of life. In his heart lies the universe as the world-egg, surrounded by a serpent with its tail in its mouth, significant of eternity.¹

When we speak of the eye of God, we use symbolic language. The Egyptian drew the symbol. The Hebrew Scriptures teem with symbolic passages, but the Jew was forbidden to make a graven image of God. The second commandment, therefore, forbids the abuse of idolatry, not the principle. For such expressions as "He came riding upon the wings of the wind," "The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous," "His right hand hath the pre-eminence," "The Ancient of days," "He sitteth upon His holy seat," "Turn Thy face from my sins," call up images before the

¹ Müller: *Glauben und Wissen d. Hindus*, plate i. figs. 1, 2; Mainz, 1822.

mind thoroughly human, and the objection to their representation in sculpture or painting was lest the Jew should halt at the physical expression of God's being, and not advance to the idea of His moral and metaphysical being.

Of the immense debt of gratitude we owe to symbolatry it is impossible to speak too highly. To it we owe the arts of painting and sculpture, and of writing, and indeed of speech. For speech is the expression of ideas in a conventional form. Writing is the same, and writing is derived from picture-painting.

It is worth considering how powerful a lever symbolism has been for lifting man. A beast cannot symbolize a thought, but man can, by the formation of a word or of a figure. Modern writing is the fusion of the two modes of expression; it is the symbolizing of the sound which symbolizes the thought. To this distinguishing instinct we therefore owe language, literature, and art; and whenever it has invaded religion it has acquired a dynamic force irresistibly impelling man to civilization; consequently the image-making peoples of antiquity stand out pre-eminent for their intelligence. The Jew is an exception, apparently, but not really, for his temple at Jerusalem was a splendid symbol on a large scale, and the ritual of its courts was intensely and intrinsically symbolic. The Arabian monotheist cannot be excepted, for all his artistic advance was due to friction against symbolatrous peoples; in his desert, where he is not brought into contact with image-makers, his natural genius lies blank and barren like the sandy flats he haunts.

That symbolism should be open to abuse, and be productive of evil, is not surprising; for nothing that is in it-

self good escapes being prejudicial if it be not co-ordinated with other good instincts. When the significance of a symbol is forgotten and the worship remains, the idol becomes a mere fetish, and then its symbolic character is perverted to gross ends. For instance, the sacred animals of Egypt were, no doubt, in the fetish age, those which were revered, and by kindness were domesticated; afterwards they were regarded as emblems only; but in the decline of Egyptian learning, when the doctrines of their religion became obscured, they became again objects of religious worship. "The sanctuaries of the temples," says Clement of Alexandria, "are covered with veils of gold tissue; but if you advance towards the end of the temple and search for the statue, a minister of the temple advances, with a grave air, chanting a hymn in Egyptian, and raises the veil a little, as though to show you the god. Then what do you see? A cat, a crocodile, an indigenous serpent, or some other dangerous animal! The god of the Egyptians appears; . . . it is a wild beast wallowing on a purple carpet."¹

"Illic cæruleos, hic piscem fluminis, illic
Oppida tota canem venerantur, nemo Dianam.
Porrum et sæpe nefas violare et frangere morsu.
O sanctas gentes, quibus hæc nascuntur in hortis
Numina!"²

In like manner the phallus, which was used in all simplicity as an emblem of the generative force of nature, became an object of revolting and indecent worship. And even when the significance of an emblem is not misconstrued or forgotten, the vulgar are liable to forget that after all it only represents one side of the religious idea, and that the metaphysical and moral side cannot be adequately represented by brush or chisel.

¹ Clem. Alexand. : Stromata.

² Juvenal : Sat. xv. 7-11.

3. IDEOLATRY.

It is impossible to worship a god whom the mind cannot idealize. To idealize him, more or less positive attributes must be conceded to him: these may be material, moral, or intellectual; but, of whatever nature they are, they must be such as those of which man has cognizance; and if moral and mental they must, if material they may, cause the idea to be human and personal.

The moral and intellectual idea is no less anthropomorphic than the sensible representation, but it is higher and better. As man's knowledge changes his idea of God changes: as he mounts the scale of existence his consciousness becomes clearer and more luminous; and his continuous idealization of his better self is an ever-improving reflex of the divine essence. The savage invests God with bodily attributes; in a more civilized state man withdraws the bodily attributes, but imposes the limitations of his own mental nature; and in his philosophic elevation he recognises in God intelligence only, though still with anthropomorphic conditions.

But as his mind thus ascends, his sentiment descends. His affections can only attach themselves to what is sensible. He can love what is individual, but not what is general. Abstractions interest his mind but deaden his heart. If he says, "I love virtue," he means, "I love the man who is virtuous." Thus, in proportion as the intelligence divests the Deity of one attribute after another, the ties binding the heart to the Divine Ideal are ruptured, and the affections steadily decline into indifference. The more thoroughly human is the God idealized, the more ardently is He loved and adored. If the idea be divested of every

attribute, and consist of mere negations, *latria* is at an end; for it ceases to be objective, and one of the indispensable conditions of worship is withdrawn.

As man is constituted he is intelligent and sentimental, and a religion which develops reason at the expense of affection, or which on the other hand is emotional and at the same time is irrational, cannot satisfy all his instincts.

CHAPTER X

THEOCRACIES

Three modes of life, the hunting, the pastoral, and the agricultural—Difficulty of passing from one mode to another—Requisites of the agricultural mode : 1. Community of land—Rise of castes—Territorial aristocracies and theocracies ; 2. Government—democratic, then feudal, then monarchic—Theocratic government ; 3. Ethics must be based on authority—Province of prophetism—of theocracies to codify laws—Theocratic codes very minute—Their object, the destruction of individuality—This not peculiar to theocracies—Benefits of theocracies.

MANKIND has passed through three modes of life, each characteristic of a phase of intellectual and religious development.

These are the Venatic, the Pastoral, and the Agricultural modes.

These divisions are not however absolute, for, perhaps, there never was a time when people did not make some rude attempts at tillage and domestication of animals. Among the refuse of lacustrine villages, which belong to a remote period, the discovery of grain and bones gnawed by dogs proves that, as far back as man can be traced, there are indications of his having attempted both.¹

So also, agricultural races have indulged occasionally in the pursuit of game, or have set apart a caste to hunt and fish and fight, whilst the bulk of the people tilled the soil ;

¹ Flottard : *Etudes sur la Théocratie* ; Paris, 1861.

and others, like the Lapps, may have altered their bent according to their geographical situation.

Some races perish from incapacity to adapt themselves to altered circumstances, as the red-skins, who are dying out with the game on which they subsist.

The tribes living solely by the chase and by fishing are the most savage and grovelling. Continually suffering from famine, obliged by the scarcity of game to live dispersed, exposed to the rigour of the seasons, to privation, fatigue, and misery, their habitual condition is one of isolation.

The pastoral tribes are less wretched. The shepherd finds in his flocks nourishment and clothing; he has time for observation and reflection. Nevertheless the condition of the pastor is often barbarous, for the demands of his flocks and herds force him into isolation. And as pasture fails he is forced to remove from spot to spot. He is subject to famines, when the springs fail and the grass is burnt up by scorching suns, or when epidemics break out among his cattle. The Hebrews, rich in flocks and herds, were frequently compelled by want to seek corn in Egypt; and the Bedouins of our own day live in misery and barbarism. "They are a pastoral population," says Mr. Palgrave, "condemned to savage life, with all its concomitants of ignorance and vice, by the circumstances of their condition, or fostered into insolence and open rapine by the weakness and negligence of those who should have kept them within due bounds. . . . The Bedouin does not fight for his home, he has none; nor for his country, that is anywhere; nor for his honour, he never heard of it; nor for his religion, he owns and cares for none. His only object in war is the temporary occupation of some bit of miserable pasture-land or the use of a brackish well."¹

¹ Palgrave : *Central and Eastern Arabia*, p. 34; London, 1865.

The agricultural race is that which is essentially the civilizing race; and when a people is forced by circumstances to discontinue its former vagabond life, and when it shows adaptability to bend to circumstances, it has entered on the road leading to civilization.

But the transition is singularly difficult. The instincts, sympathies, and habits of the nomad revolt against innovation and change of state. The labour of tillage is odious to him, and it is only after long experience that he learns to love it. Accustomed to live in tents, he must confine himself within stone walls. From being able to wander in freedom, he is obliged to remain chained to one spot. All notions of restraint on his free action upon the impulse of the moment are repugnant to his nature. Long apprenticeship can alone eradicate from his mind the idea that murder and brigandage are the paths to glory, and supplant them with the idea of submission to law and self-devotion to the common weal.

Probably religion alone was capable of effecting this radical change—of subduing the irritable and suspicious independence of the primitive races, and of casting into the midst of them the germ of definite alliance, an interest, an idea, a belief held in common, around which institutions might consolidate. Those peoples who, like the Indians, the Egyptians, the Persians, and the Jews, had an intelligent sacerdotal caste to govern them, passed rapidly into powerful nationalities. Those, on the contrary, among whom a theocracy was unable to obtain foot-hold have remained in barbarism.

For the prosecution of agriculture security is essential, and that could only be attained by the establishment of a government; and government, to become permanent, was obliged to call to its aid the religious sentiment of the

people. The great founders of civilization, those who gave a race the twist from nomadic to a sedentary life, were prophets, men of minds above the ordinary level, who saw the necessity of a radical change in the mode of life, and who had courage to enforce this change as a religious duty. Mahomet was both a religious and a political regenerator of Arabia. Zarathustra acted the same double office for Iran. Moses aimed at not merely recasting the belief of the Israelites, but at changing their ancestral and traditional pastoral life to one of agriculture. The priests and kings of Egypt formed but one order; the early kings of Greece, like those of Rome, were monarchs and pontiffs at the same time. Agamemnon, before the old men of the Greek army, sacrificed to Zeus.¹ The Eupatrides of Athens, and the Patricians of Rome, possessed the magistracy and the priesthood, the interpretation of the civil and the religious laws. Traces of this confusion of religious and political power remain to this day. The emperors of Germany are vested, on the day of their coronation, in a cassock and white alb. The kings of France in the Middle Ages wore at their coronation nearly all the vestments proper to a priest. The kings of Poland were buried in sacerdotal garb.

Agricultural and sedentary life necessitated some protective organization, and this was either sacerdotal or political, or most generally the two combined. Before entering into the forms of organization, it will be necessary to consider the exigencies of a community disposed to abandon its roving habits, and to build cities and cultivate lands.

Three conditions are necessary: 1. The possession of a fertile country; 2. The establishment of a strong and stable government; 3. The elaboration of ethical law.

From these three conditions three sorts of institutions,

¹ *Iliad*, iii. 275.

corresponding to the requirements of property, security, and morality, have arisen: 1. Landed communities; 2. Government; 3. Magistracies.

These three classes of institutions are found among all peoples arrived at a certain standard of civilization; they are not necessarily theocratic, but under this mode of civilization they have contracted a form altogether special, and very different from that which they ultimately assume.

I. The appropriation of the soil, and even of moveables, such as we understand, is an idea foreign to the hunting and fishing races. In the age when men lived by the chase everything belonged to all, and no one could arrogate to himself peculiar property, least of all land. All that men sought with infinite labour were the necessities of life, and these were common property. But with the adoption of the sedentary life men's views underwent a total change, though not all at once. Their method of regarding property passed through four stages. 1. Lands were cultivated by all, and fruits were enjoyed by all. 2. Lands were cultivated by some, and fruits were enjoyed by all. 3. Lands were cultivated by slaves, and the fruits were enjoyed by the owners. 4. Lands were cultivated by paid labourers, who received remuneration out of the fruits.

At first, land and its fruits were the common property of all. Every member of the tribe cultivated the land, either separately or in one common field, and all equally shared the fruits of their labour. This was, indeed, a necessity. For, if the race had started with private property, jealousies and discord would have ruptured the bond, and broken up the nascent society. In Crete and in Sparta of old community of goods was the rule. In the

Celtic clans, bearing a common name and occupying a common estate, and in the ancient Gaulish and German societies, the land was in the corporate ownership of the community. We are told by Cæsar and Tacitus that nowhere was a private individual allowed to monopolize a portion of the soil, which was regarded as public property.¹ And the latter informs us that the fields were occupied by all in turn. Diodorus tells us that in India no private person was permitted to call the land his own, but that the king was regarded as the sole possessor, and that those who cultivated the soil paid him a rent.²

Such, in the Middle Ages, was the position of the villein, or serf, towards the noble proprietor. "The village community of India," says Mr. Maine, "is at once an organized patriarchal society, and an assemblage of co-proprietors. The personal relations to each other of the men who compose it are indistinguishably confounded with their proprietary rights."³ In some of the South American tribes, especially in Paraguay, the same community of property is exercised. The Annals of China assure us that in remote antiquity the land was the heritage of all, but that it became afterwards the property of the emperor, who allotted it among the officers of state, but without permission to sell or give it away. In Egypt, the inundation of the Nile must have interfered with the establishment of private rights; anyhow, such as there were, they were bought up, at the advice of Joseph, by the crown.⁴ In Ethiopia, a large field near a city was daily spread with

¹ Cæsar : *De Bello Gall.* lib. iv. c. i. Tacitus : *German.* c. 26 ; "Agri, pro numero cultorum, ab universis per vices occupantur, quos mox inter se secundum dignationem partiuntur."

² Diod. *Sicul.* t. ii. c. 40.

³ Maine : *Ancient Law*, p. 128 ; London, 1861.

⁴ *Gen.* xlvii. 19, 20.

viands, by the magistrates, for the nourishment of the poor inhabitants. This, which came to be regarded as a religious act, was, in truth, but a tradition of the ancient right of the people to share in the produce of the soil.¹

The Church also began by attempting to establish community of goods,² but failed, as every other society has failed, through a radical defect in the system. Communism necessarily produces idleness; it in fact offers a premium to idleness, for a man receives, under that system, his share, whether he be active or indolent, and thus the main spur to action is withdrawn. When the Church abandoned communism, it preserved a tradition of what it had attempted, in the institution of *Agapæ*, or feasts given to the poor: of this the offertory is a vestige.

From a state of society in which all tilled the soil and all partook of the fruit of the soil, the next stage was a differentiation of offices. It was found that some were needed to defend the little state, and to be constantly on the watch against enemies. Thus arose the military caste. They at first protected the labourers, and for their services received a share equal to that they would have been given had they toiled in the fields; but this caste soon began to exercise its power upon the agriculturists, and to reduce them to an inferior position. This the warriors were able to do by the capture of slaves in their skirmishes. Having slaves, they claimed land on which to employ their slaves, and thus the warrior caste rapidly became a territorial aristocracy.

But alongside of the military caste arose the sacerdotal caste, and that also claimed exemption from manual work, and a right to a share of the fruits of the earth. Thus the

¹ Herod. iii. 17—25.

² Acts ii. 44, 45; iv. 32, 34, 35.

cultivator had to work for the warrior and for the priest, as well as for himself. The Levites were forbidden to possess lands. "The priests, the Levites, and all the tribe of Levi, shall have no part nor inheritance with Israel; they shall eat the offerings of the Lord made by fire, and his inheritance."¹ The Buddhist priests also live in community on the oblations of the faithful, and those of the Aztecs were likewise supported by the laity.

The theory is just enough, but its exaggeration is pernicious. The maintenance of a body of soldiers was necessary, and so was the maintenance of a sacerdotal body, whose office it was to arbitrate between the cultivators and the soldiers, to devise laws for the governance of the community, and to attend to the religious wants of all.

II. Another institution necessitated by a sedentary race is a government; this was met by the formation of a secular or of a religious government, or both united. Any man who is remarkable for his physical perfection, for his strength, beauty, height, and talent, is a chief by nature; and any man remarkable for his intellectual perfection, his moral exaltation and spiritual impulse, is a priest by nature. Homer calls his heroes "divine;" the kings are sons of gods, and every brave warrior is "like to the gods." The priesthood owes its origin to the general idea, that a special gift and peculiar faculty possessed by certain persons, or families, or castes, are due to their being set specially apart by God. In the family the father is the superior being, who is at once king and priest of the little commonwealth and church of his fireside. The tribe is the expansion of the family, and its internal framework is not different. In

¹ Deut. xviii. 1.

the family, if one member suffers all the members suffer with it; and if one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. The same interchange of offices, the same assistance in danger, the same division of labour, and the same principle of government, which made the family stronger than the individual, makes the social clan stronger than a nomadic tribe without tie. The patriarchal form of government is a reproduction of the family on a larger scale.

But a patriarchate is no autocracy, or was not in the first age of constitutional systematization; on the contrary, it was a democracy in spirit, though not in form, in which respect for native superiority and a willingness to yield to it was conspicuous.

The chief exercised his authority solely by consent of the tribe; he was bound by obligations. If he disregarded these obligations, his authority was withdrawn. When there was no private property worth the name, there was no fulcrum and no hold for authority independent of that conceded willingly. Among the Iroquois, any man who could persuade any others to follow him became their chief for the nonce. If these followers tired of his authority they left him, and his chieftainship was at an end. Among the North American Indians, the government has never passed from this primary stage; the clans have their chiefs, but the tribe has no chief of chiefs. It is governed by a council of chieftains or sachems. Among the Iroquois the heads of the five clans, fifty in all, assemble in council, and form the executive of the confederacy. The Jesuit Lafitau thus describes it: "It is a greasy assemblage, sitting *sur leur derrière*, crouched like apes, their knees as high as their ears, or lying, some on their bellies, some on their backs, each with a pipe in his mouth.

discussing affairs of state with as much coolness and gravity as the Spanish Junta or the Grand Council of Venice.”¹

When the chiefs found means of consolidating their power and establishing a hereditary right, the liberties of the tribe suffered. The chief was no longer bound by obligations; and the democratic aristocracy resolved itself into a feudal aristocracy. For mutual protection the chiefs united and elected one of their number king; that is, *primus inter pares*, not absolute. Thus the third stage was reached—elective monarchy; the stage at which rested mediæval Germany, true to the traditions of Teutonic antiquity. By degrees the hereditary principle was again admitted, and the crown passed from father to son. At once the reigning family sought to establish and extend its power. Throughout the Middle Ages we see a constant struggle engaged in between the crown and its vassals, and it was not till the Crusades had broken the power of the nobility, or civil war had exhausted their resources, that the prerogative of the crown became absolute. But absolute power lodged in the hands of one man is against the instincts of humanity, and there has ensued ever since a steady reaction towards those democratic principles upon which constitutions were reared. In the Church a similar course has been run. Its primitive organization was purely democratic; it allowed the widest liberty consistent with the weal of the general body, it recognised the right of the governed to choose their governor. “He who is to be preferred to all, let him be elected by all,” wrote S. Leo I.² It spoke not by the lips of a single man, but by the consent of the whole corporate body through its representatives. As soon as the election of the bishops passed out of the hands of the

¹ Lafitau: *Mœurs des Sauvages*, i. 478 ; Paris, 1723.

² Epist. lxxxix.

people, the Church entered into a feudal stage, and from that into an autocracy. When Hildebrand gathered up the reins of government in his powerful hand to transmit them to his successors, the ecclesiastical elective primacy became an absolute supremacy.

Greece also at one period offers the spectacle of democratic priesthoods freely elected by the citizens, and conferred for a limited period. An hereditary hierarchy was the exception; and the people chose the *ἱεροποιοί*, charged with the performance of the annual and monthly sacrifices. The election was made either by vote of hand (*χειροτονία*) or by lot. Thus, a number of extant Greek inscriptions record this mode of election in contradistinction to that by nomination through magistrates, which was the case with those who were to execute certain peculiar functions.¹ At the time of the Roman subjugation, nearly all the priests were freely elected. The mode of election varied according to place, and often the suffrage was combined with the lot. Thus at Syracuse, the high priest of Olympian Zeus was chosen in the same manner as S. Matthias was chosen by the Apostles. The candidates were selected by the suffrages of the ten tribes, their names were placed in a hydria, one was withdrawn by hazard, and this was the name of the successful candidate.²

In India, the Brahmanic caste is constituted on aristocratic principles, and it forms a vast corporation, enjoying considerable privileges, but without a common centre of authority. They compose a sacerdotal aristocracy counterbalancing the military aristocracy. The Egyptian hierarchy

¹ Boekh; De Sacerdotibus Græcorum; ap. Philological Museum; Cambridge, 1833.

² Diod. Sicul. xvi. 70. Cic. II. in Verr. ii. 51; iii. 15.

was more rigorously constituted than that of the Brahmans, but it was also without a single spiritual chief, as apex to the sacerdotal structure.

The Persian priesthood, if it did not constitute a spiritual monarchy, established at least a series of little monarchic governments, placed side by side. The arch-magus, or *desturan-destur*, without being the head of the religion, was the head of all the ecclesiastical societies in the province: he was like the patriarch of a Christian Church.

In Thibet exists, to this day, a vast religious supremacy, that of the Llama, the head and crown of the religious and political government, his vast authority exceeding the prerogatives enjoyed by many an autocratic emperor of Byzantium. He is the ultimate depositary of spiritual and temporal power to the inhabitants of Thibet, and to the hordes of barbarous Kalmuks roving from the marshes of the Volga to the ruins of Samarcand.

III. Ethics, and a disciplinary code, was another necessity. The agricultural and industrial communities were the frames and moulds into which the barbarous races flowed to assume shape and stability. The castes, with their distinct attributes, and their hierarchic subordination, were the necessary complement to the system of social organization—furnishing, as they did, a special function for each, and giving to each his share in the rights and responsibilities of the nascent society. But these means of civilization, exterior and material as they are, would be inapplicable and inefficacious if they were not frankly accepted by those to whom they applied.

That civilized society may be founded, the minds and hearts of barbarians must be in some measure prepared

that they may acquiesce in the change of condition, that they may be subjugated, and, in a word, be converted. Such is the sphere of those religious enthusiasts, great prophet legislators, who by their zeal and vigour of character throw a spell over multitudes and lead them where they will. Fanaticism is the most powerful means, even in the present day, of influencing a mob. The vast majority of civilized men are not guided by reason; and among savages, the number who are under the influence of common sense is infinitesimally small. For good or for ill, enthusiasm, zeal, fanaticism—call it what you will—is the grand motive force swaying the souls of men.

But the situation of a newly civilized race is subject to temptations to retrograde. All ancient civilizations have suffered hesitation and partial relapse. To combat these instincts, to foresee and provide against this recoil, becomes a necessity, and the secular or religious executive is obliged to restrain and hedge about liberty of action, and destroy individuality of thought. To this are due the innumerable and minute prescriptions of theocratic legislation, the severe and inflexible discipline which regulates all operations, foresees all contingencies, and hampers man's every action from the cradle to the grave. Not his actions only are ruled, but his words, his very thoughts as well; he becomes an instrument, and ceases to be an individual; he acts on the initiative of authority, and thinks according to accredited forms.

The Israelites are a case in point. They were tied down in a thousand particulars, and a thousand impediments were cast in their way, lest they should desert monotheism for idolatry: yet their history from the Exodus to the Captivity is one of constant relapse, in spite of every precaution. They returned from captivity with their rules of

life made infinitely more precise, and gradually made more and more elaborate. Then, when worn out by petty dissensions, the Jews submitted to Rome to arbitrate between the dissentient parties: Rome caught the reins of government into her hands and lashed the people, till she lashed them into revolt. Jerusalem fell; its site was sown with salt, and the plough was drawn over the foundations of its temple. The existence of the Jews as a nation was annihilated, but Jewdom survives to this day. The same story of invasion and slaughter and dispersion is frequent enough in the Roman annals, but other peoples were broken by their subjugation, and mingled their blood with that flowing in the veins of their conquerors. But the Jew to this day has remained, wherever cast, isolated from all others, unabsorbed by other races. How is this to be accounted for? By the Talmud, which is a minute rule of life, an adaptation of Mosaism to the exigencies of altered times, so as to mould every Jew upon one rigid pattern, and make indelible the Jewish type; his every act and thought and word is mapped out for him, and any eccentric act and deviation in thought and word from the hard Rabbinic norm is rebuked as impious, as meet for Gentiles but improper for Jews.

In Egypt the hierarchy adopted the same course. "The kings of Egypt," says Diodorus, "could not act as they would. Everything was ruled by laws, not only their public life, but their private and intimate life as well. . . . The hours of the day and of the night at which the king had duties to perform were fixed by law, and could not be arbitrarily chosen. The hours for sleep, for rising, for bathing, for sacrifice, for reading, for meals, for walking, for cohabitation, were carefully regulated. The nature of the food he was to eat at each repast, the

amount of wine he was to drink, were also fixed. The high priest daily praised the king in his presence, and ended by blaming the faults he might chance involuntarily to commit."¹

The Indian law of Manu exhibits the same multiplicity and tenuity of the meshes of the vast net in which a theocracy, at a certain epoch, envelopes humanity. This law indicates the manner in which the Indian is to eat, drink, clothe himself, relieve his bowels, wash his feet, cut his nails and hair, bathe, and even perform the most secret functions. It designates with precision the hours of rising and going to rest; it tells him what precautions he is to take for his personal security; it enunciates the rights and duties peculiar to each caste and each subdivision of caste, the washers, the weavers, the tillers of the soil, &c.² A Brahman may not void himself without observing twenty-three rules, some of which refer to the choice of a spot, some to cleanliness, some to the thoughts on which he is to occupy his mind at the time. He is not to speak, nor munch even a crumb, nor to look at the sun or at certain specified trees and plants, but he is to think three times on Vishnu and to drink thrice to his honour.³

But this interference with the liberty of the individual, for the purpose of slowly and surely undermining his independence and originality, is the result aimed at by secular government every whit as much as by a theocracy. The reason is obvious. A people reduced to mere machines are far more easy to govern, far more pliable than one effervescing with energy and independence. Peru was an illustration. The Inca was to his people a father indeed,

¹ Diod. Sicul. i. 70.

² Laws of Manu, iv. 43 *seq.*, 60 *seq.*, 76-79, 92, 93, 152, 201, &c.

³ Dubois : Mœurs, Institutions, &c. de l'Inde; Paris, 1825.

for his people were reduced to the condition of childhood; they had no will of their own, no power of exercising choice as to the work they were to do, or when they were to do it, what food they were to eat, and how it was to be cooked, when and whom they were to marry. The Chinese are without religion, yet they have all been moulded into one type; they are without individuality, they act alike, talk alike, think alike, look alike; and the agency in this case is that public opinion which is the public law. The tyranny of democracy is quite as depressing as that of autocracy or theocracy. We feel it in a measure in our own day, when the many strive to thrust every wheel into the same rut, and flatten every mental and moral irregularity of outline to the level of commonplace; when, to accomplish this task, public opinion penetrates into our most sacred privacy and passes judgment on our inmost thoughts, and condemning its erratic geniuses to the work-house or the asylum. As Jean Paul Richter truly says, "Our century is tolerant of opinions, but is intolerant to actions. We dare express every opinion freely, but practise no virtue without fear of ridicule. We venture to judge without knowing the opinions of others to guide us, but we do not venture to act differently from others. We tolerate all sorts of freethinkers, but not all sorts of saints."

This disciplinary minuteness is a political necessity at a certain epoch of civilization. Without it the execution of national undertakings on a large scale would be imperfect. In warfare the principle is to this day admitted; and a host of savages fighting each for himself without reference to his companions flies like chaff before a handful of disciplined soldiers acting as articulations of one body. In the age of primeval barbarism, the social unit was the individual; in the nomadic epoch, it was the family; in

the despotic period, the unit was the nation. The family is strong because, in it, some five or six interests are fused into a single force; and the despotic organization is mighty because, in it, millions of energies are directed as the energy of one.

The method pursued to destroy originality is the expenditure of mental force on trivialities, the whipping of the vital stream into a froth of ritual observance. This reduces man's originality to zero, and makes him but a living wheel in one vast mechanical structure.

In a theocracy there is neither individuality, personality, nor originality; there is but a community, an organization, and a law: it is an infallible, absolute, all powerful, universal, and immutable government, exercised in the name of divinity by religious chiefs, interpreters of the divine commands, ministers and representatives of God upon earth.

That a theocracy is beneficial at certain ages cannot be doubted. It has educated nations, taught the principle of cohesion, fostered science, encouraged art, developed literature. That in other ages it is mischievous cannot be doubted either. It has restrained independence, shackled commerce, conventionalized art, mummified science, cramped literature, and stifled thought.

If there is to be a religion at all, there must be community, organization, and law; and the defect of a theocracy is not the recognition of this truth, but exaggeration in its application of it.

CHAPTER XI

THE ETHICS OF RELIGION

The moral sense an intellectual faculty—Arises from the perception of pleasure and pain, and the belief in causation—Necessity of ethics to man—Growth of the moral faculty—Conscience directed by the law—Sense of responsibility—Duties to man, to God, to beasts, to self—Precepts of an ethic code—Jewish code—Mazdæan code—The ethical bearings of Polytheism—Greek morals—Scandinavian morals—The ethical bearings of Monotheism—Jewish morals—Mohammedan morals—The ethical bearings of Pantheism—Aristotle's ethics—The desire of happiness the key to moral activity—This is self-love, a natural instinct—Ancient confusion of responsibilities—Modern disengagement of duties and their systematization.

IS the moral sense an intellectual faculty, or is it a sentiment? It is certainly the former. Religion may be emotional, but ethics must be intellectual.

Morals are a science founded upon conceptions of the mind, and bear some analogy to that of geometry. A child does not enter the world with a mind stored with mathematical figures, nor with a conscience graduated to the admeasurement of right and wrong. It enters the world with an inherent faculty of disengaging conditions of being one from another, and of comparing impressions, and then of classifying them. It arranges into groups, for instance, the qualities of material objects: the colour it separates from the form, and the form from the size, and the size from the weight. It reduces each group to a system. In

that of colour, it tabulates the reds, and the blues, and the yellows; distinct impressions, but arranged by the mind side by side, because of a certain likeness of nature observed between them. In the group of shape it places circles, ovals, squares, triangles, &c. The mind acts in a similar manner to produce ethics. But there is this distinction to be drawn between the method by which geometric forms are conceived, and that by which moral concepts are reached. These latter are based on observation of acts, the former on observation of objects. Distinction in form is arrived at by a process of comparison on variously-shaped material objects, distinction in morals by a process of comparison of the results of different acts. Thus the mind classes acts together, some as just, others as unjust; some as merciful, others as cruel; the just it opposes to the unjust, as in colour it contrasts red with green, and as in form the circle with the square. But the mind does not regard acts with the same equanimity as it does forms, colours, and the like, for this reason, that these acts effect the self pleurably or painfully. If the nerves did not transmit sensations of delight and of anguish, men would discuss the morality and immorality of acts with as supreme indifference as they do the forms of figures and the tints of colours.

The distinction of right from wrong, being an intelligent process, is imperfect or complete according to the quality and education of the mind. An Australian Indian has no word for triangle; because he does not distinguish shapes in the abstract. A man who does not distinguish between the morality and immorality of acts is in an analogous condition of mental barbarism.

The elements of pure mathematics are ideas of quantity, of indivisibility, of unity either in number or in space, of

surface, limitation, solidity, and the like. All these ideas are simple. On how many pure ideas are ethics based? Apparently upon the idea of causation applied to the sensations of pleasure and pain—that is to say, when man is conscious of pleasure or of pain, he seeks a cause to account for his sensations. He observes that pleasure or pain follows immediately or proximately upon certain acts. In those acts which he conceives to be productive of happiness he traces a certain likeness, he classes them, and designates them as virtuous; and those which result in misery he terms vicious. Also, as from the comparison of a number of shapes he obtains the abstract notion of geometric form, so, from the comparison of a number of acts, he forms the abstract ideas of virtue and vice.

To man is given, what is denied to the beast, an almost unlimited power of benefiting and injuring his fellow-men, and not the fellow-men of his own generation merely, but also those of future ages. He can build a bridge to facilitate traffic, or he can throw a weir across a river to impede transport. The lion will swoop down on the antelope and kill it, that he may satiate his appetite on the carcass, but when gorged he will bask in the sun, and suffer a herd of antelopes to approach him with impunity. The home-fed cat is a bad mouser. The beast kills that he may eat, not that he loves to kill. But in man there is the will and the power to destroy, not for self-preservation, but for the love of destruction. The impulse to slay is transient in the brute, it is permanent in the man. The child plucks a flower, that he may rip off its petals; the boy chases a butterfly, that he may beat the beauty out of its wings; the sportsman pursues the fish, the fox, and the hare, that

out of them he may throttle the life. The beast does not rage against its own kind; but the prey of man is man. The tigresses of a Bengal jungle will not assemble to contemplate the dying throes of their fellows; but the cultivated ladies of Rome were wont to crowd into the amphitheatre to enjoy the sport of gladiators massacring each other. The panther of Brazil will not sit down to watch the agonies of expiring panther-whelps; but the North American Indian women will laugh and clap their hands to see the children of other women spitted before a fire.

The motive is not innate cruelty, but innate love of excitement, and the keenest excitement subsists alongside of the extremest danger. Without provocation, or ambition of conquest, but actuated by the mere love of fighting, the Iroquois fell on the Hurons in the seventeenth century, and banished fifteen thousand souls from the chases of earth to the happy hunting-grounds of the spirit-world. There is a flutter of excitement awakened in the pursuit of the butterfly; higher pleasure is found in coursing the doubling hare; there is danger, therefore higher pleasure, in hunting the boar; and culminating pleasure is found in meeting man, because in that contest is elicited every faculty the savage possesses. Again: the beast will revenge itself on the creature that has injured it, and then retire satisfied by that one act of vengeance. But man's revenge, the more it is glutted, the more furiously it rages. He distributes his animosity over all who are allied to the person who has wronged him, to all related to him by blood, or by ties of service.

Consequently, mankind would be in imminent danger of perishing from the face of the earth, and the "last man" dreamed of by the poet would have a fair chance of becoming a reality. Races of animals have disappeared, unable

to sustain the struggle against more powerful races; and the race of man must infallibly have shared their fate. assailed on all sides by the savage beasts, by the rigours of climate, and above all by the foes of his own household, had not Nature provided compensation by making him a social and gregarious animal. How she effected this has been already shown.

As soon as man became a member of a community he discovered that he was a relative being; that his happiness depended on others; that to secure their goodwill he must sacrifice some of his freedom. If every man had considered himself at liberty to injure his fellow-men at will, and had carried his theory into effect whenever he had an opportunity, society could not have existed. His passions had to be subjected to restraint, and this restraint fretting him, the idea of moral evil bursts upon his soul.

A babe and a primeval savage follow their animal instincts whithersoever they lead, perfectly unconscious of distinction between right and wrong. But when the babe grows out of long clothes it perceives that it is a member of a family. When the savage has clubbed together with other savages, he ascertains that those associated with him have their rights as well as himself, and that an infringement of their liberties reacts upon his own.

The community must protect the rights of its members. When one has broken through the right of another, and has suffered for it, he conceives the idea of *wrong*. Thus the idea of wrong is associated with the fear of punishment; and the idea, combined with the sentiment corresponding to it, form what is called the conscience.

This conscience will be tender if relativability be clearly apprehended, and punishment be keenly dreaded. Living

as an unit, man had no responsibilities ; but when he became a social being, with the circumscription of his liberties came the sense of duty. The enforcement of laws produced a feeling of restraint. He was conscious of a struggle within himself between will and fear. His impulse was to kill his neighbour, but dread of the consequences restrained him.

His idea of morality is shaped by the law of the tribe. If the law allow him to eat his wife, he will devour her with clear conscience ; if it forbid him to paint his cheeks, a dab of ochre on the side of his face will wound his moral sensibility. A barbarous government will draw up a rough code which will require much erasure and interpolation, for ethics are tentative. As the code alters, so will the idea of what is sinful change. In Sparta, theft was a virtue ; in Iceland, the murder of a rival was a duty. The Lacedæmonian thief and the Scandinavian murderer unquestionably felt the glow of approving conscience when the one brained his adversary, and the other picked a pocket. At the present date these *ci-devant* virtues have been categorized as crimes, and those who commit them now become preys to remorse.

Thus the polity taught man that certain acts, interfering with the rights of others, were productive of misery to himself. He at once applied this new idea to other miseries. He suffered from the inclemency of the weather, from the storm and the whirlwind, from flood and from flame. He inferred that they too were punishments executed because certain other rights had been neglected—the rights of God.

I have observed that among the labouring poor, very generally, punishment is inflicted on children, not for moral delinquencies, but for disturbance of domestic tranquillity,

or for damaging the property of the parents. These brats grow up with their ideas of right and wrong graduated to the temper of the father or mother. The deadly sins of poor children are, making an uproar, breaking crockery, tearing clothes, running against their parents, and falling ill.

Now the savage grows up with just as rude a moral code. He is whipped by the storm, and sent to bed without his supper; and he supposes, very naturally, that he has done something to offend his god. What his offences are he does not know for certain, and he guesses this or that, in hopes of at last hitting on the right cause. When he lived as an unit he had no idea that the physical powers, which he worshipped as gods, pained him *because* he had done something to annoy them; but as soon as the connexion between delinquency and penalty was learnt by his becoming one of a community, then, at once, he drew up a code of duties which he supposed were due to God. Thus his table of commandments was twofold; one contained the laws affecting his relation to God, the other contained those touching his relation to the community.

But he had other relations than those existing between himself and God, and himself and his neighbour. He was associated with the domestic animals; to them he was indebted for clothing and for food, and for protection. The cow and reindeer supplied him with milk and meat, and with hides which covered his hut, and excluded the cold; the sheep gave him their soft fleeces to clothe his skin; the dog mounted guard over his flocks, and signalled the approach of the wolf or the thief; the horse bore him from place to place, and facilitated his migrations, carrying the poles of his hovel, and his wife and little ones. That he owed them something for all their glad service he was convinced—convinced by the fact that sometimes, and that

especially in the first ages, ere their domestication was complete, they resisted his sovereignty. When he cultivated the soil, he conceived that he owed it responsibilities also; for at times the fruit-tree proved stubborn, and the field refused to yield its crop.

Thus a third table was added to his law, containing the commandments affecting his relation to the earth and the domestic animals.

Eventually he learnt that he owed duties to himself. He discovered that there was happiness to be found in a sphere above that of animal gratification. Among a host of creatures devoid of morals, and without other law than the gratification of their brute instincts, man feels that he is born to a more noble existence. He is sensible that his happiness is not wholly dependent on the material world and on his fellow-men. He perceives that his nature has two foci, and that his highest satisfaction is obtained by directing his vital force on that focus which is not animal. Sensual pleasures are insufficient to quench that craving after intense and permanent happiness, which is the dynamic force of his nature. His ambition urges him to rise to loftier raptures. The enjoyment derived from the pleasures of sense is of short duration, and after indulgence becomes sensibly less. If he yields to the instinct which raises him, his moral being rises; he passes from easy to arduous duties, and at every step he feels himself nobler and happier than he was before. If, on the contrary, he refuses to listen to the instinct directing him to the spiritual life, and endeavours to expel it, he succeeds indeed (for moral necessities disappear if not satisfied), though not without a struggle.

Thus a fourth table was added to his law, a table regulating his duties to himself.

If we take these four tables forming the ethic code, and consider them closely, we find that each table is capable of subdivision into groups of precepts.

1. The duties man owes to his fellow-men fall into these classes :—

- α. Duties of family.
- β. Duties of caste.
- γ. Political duties.
- δ. General duties.

The duties of family include the regulation of degrees of consanguinity within which marriage is unlawful, as well as the mutual duties of husband and wife, of children and parents, and of brethren and sisters.

The special duties belong to members of the sacerdotal order, to those of the military caste, to the landed proprietor, to the poor, and to the slave.

The political duties refer to his relations to the whole body politic.

The general duties include those relating to man with man, and those to man with woman, and to dealings with strangers.

2. The duties he owes to God may be subdivided as follow :—

- α. Study of the law.
- β. Prayer.
- γ. Praise.
- δ. Sacrifice.

3. The duties he owes to animals and to the earth may be thus grouped .—

- α. Care of domestic animals.
- β. Regard for wild animals.
- γ. Observance of agricultural rules.

4. The duties he owes to himself are:—

- a.* The cultivation of the intellect—science and art.
- β.* The cultivation of the affections—humanity.
- γ.* The subjugation of the carnal appetites—asceticism.
- δ.* The preservation of health; including rules for cleanliness, for diet, and for clothing; and precautions against infection.

It will be found on examination that most ethic codes embrace all these relations, and regulate action in all, or most of all, these particulars.

Let us take first the law of Moses, and then that of Zarathustra, as examples.

Moses lays down strict rules as to degrees of consanguinity within which marriage is unlawful.¹ The object of marriage is mutual solace and the procreation of children.² Marriages were legitimate only if made (*a*) between Hebrews, or a Hebrew and a proselyte,³ (*b*) between a man and woman who was an heiress of the same tribe,⁴ (*c*) in the Levitical tribe, between those sound in body and of unblemished reputation.⁵ The relative duties of husband and wife were fixed.⁶ Parents were bound to take care of and educate their children;⁷ children were required to honour, fear, and cherish their parents.⁸ The duties of the sacerdotal caste are laid down in the law of Moses with minute precision; the military caste never assumed pro-

¹ Levit. xx. 11, 12, 17-21. Let it be understood that I do not assume Moses to be the author of the Pentateuch, and that I use his name here solely as a matter of convenience.

² Gen. i. 28; ii. 24.

³ Deut. vii. 3.

⁴ Numb. xxvii. 1-11; xxxvi. 1-12.

⁵ Levit. xxi. 7, 13-15

⁶ Levit. xii.; xv. 18-33; xix. 20-22; xx. 18. Numb. v. 12. etc.

⁷ Deut. iv. 9; vi. 7; xi. 19.

⁸ Levit. xix. 3. Deut. v. 16. xxvii. 16

minence, if it ever existed, among the Hebrews. The land of Canaan, which was regarded as belonging to Jehovah, was parcelled out among the 61,730 families of Israel by lot;¹ the land became private property, and was to descend from father to son, the eldest having two-thirds of the property, and the rest being shared among the other children.² Provision was made for the poor,³ and protection was extended to the slave.⁴ The political duties were inculcated with care, and the duties to men of other nations, strangers, and outcasts were laid down; and especially all relating to the intercourse between man and woman, and to care and consideration for the property of others.

The duties to God were briefly summarized in the first four commandments of the Decalogue, and expanded with great minuteness in the book Leviticus; the rules are too numerous to be here quoted.⁵

The duties to beasts and to the land were also particularized. The cattle were to rest one day in seven, the earth was to lie fallow every seventh year, and the fruits to be given to the poor and the wild animals.⁶ No beast was to be killed with its young,⁷ or to be wounded.⁸ Eggs were to be spared in a nest,⁹ and a lamb was not to be seethed in its mother's milk.¹⁰ Fruit trees were not to be cut down.¹¹

The duties man owed to himself under the Mosaic law were chiefly those relating to the preservation of his health, for which he was ruled minutely in all details of cleanli-

¹ Numb. xxvi. 51-56.

² Deut. xxi. 7.

³ Levit. xxv. 5, *seq.* Deut. xii. 11, *seq.*; xiv. 22, *seq.*; xvi. 10.

⁴ Exod. xxi. 20, 26; Levit. xxv. 39, 46.

⁵ Exod. xx. 10; xxiii. 12.

⁶ Exod. xxiii. 11. Levit. xxv. 7.

⁷ Levit. xxii. 28.

⁸ Levit. xxii. 24. Joseph. Antiq. iv. 8, 40.

⁹ Deut. xxii. 6.

¹⁰ Exod. xxiii. 19.

¹¹ Deut. xx. 19.

ness, diet, and clothing. The washing of vessels out of which he ate,¹ of his person,² and of his clothes,³ was insisted on as a religious duty. He was forbidden to eat certain meats, which were regarded as unwholesome.⁴ The reason of their unwholesomeness he did not know, but the fact he had ascertained by experience. A Jew shrank with horror from eating the flesh of swine, through fear of moral pollution; a European will avoid it in the East through fear of *Trichinus spiralis*. To the Jew it was a sin to eat the hare; shortness of fuel or imperfect cleaning had proved to him that it was dangerous, the reason being that that creature is rarely free from tape-worm. The greatest precautions were enjoined for the avoidance of infection through putrescent matter,⁵ and excretions,⁶ and association with diseased persons.⁷

The law of Zarathustra is not more particular in its directions. The first duties of family binding on the Parsee are marriage and the procreation of children. Marriage was frequently recommended by Zarathustra, especially among those related by blood, more particularly cousins. Such a union is termed by the Zend-Avesta, an "action worthy of heaven;" the object being the preservation of purity of caste. One wife was ordered to each man, but a second might be added in the event of the first proving barren. The husband was bound to be faithful to his wife, and to take tender care of her. The wife was bound to worship her husband every morning. The child was re-

¹ Mark vii. 4. ² Levit. xiv. 9; xv. 16; xxii. 6. Deut. xxiii. 11.

³ Numb. xxxi. 24. Levit. xi. 25, 40.

⁴ Levit. xi. 2-23.

⁵ Numb. v. 2; ix. 6; xix. 11, 13; xxxi. 19, &c.

⁶ Deut. xxiii. 10-13. Levit. xv. 16.

⁷ Numb. xii. 14. Levit. xiii. 3, 46. Deut. xxiv. 8, 9.

quired to submit absolutely to its parents, and death was the punishment inflicted on the child that answered its father and mother three times. At the age of fifteen the child was expected to receive a spiritual director to instruct him in the law.

The Parsees had four castes—priests, warriors, labourers, and artisans. These castes were hereditary. The priest was to be revered as the mediator betwixt God and man, and to be implicitly obeyed in the penances he enjoined. The duties particular to each caste were traced with the utmost precision by the great Iranian lawgiver.

The duties owed by the Mazdæan to God were reading of the law, prayer, and sacrifice. The law, emanating from Ahura-Mazda and revealed to Zarathustra, was divine, the source of spiritual and bodily health. By prayer man guarded himself from the attacks and power of the evil principle and his attendant spirits; it was to be offered up at all times and in all places. Prayer was to be made on rising from sleep and on retiring to bed; on eating, sneezing, cutting the hair, and paring the nails; on kindling sticks and lighting a lamp. The sacrifices were bound up with the worship of fire; no sacrifice could be offered without a priest; the sacrificial offerings were flowers, fruits, and the branches and juice of the sacred Hom.

Of the duties owed by the Mazdæan to animals, an instance has been already given. They were extended to the cow, the sheep, and the cock.

The duties he owed himself were purity of thought, purity of speech, and purity of act. The purity of the soul was maintained by confession and purification, or by washing with urine and salt and water the new-born child, the menstruous woman, the mother after child-birth, and the whole person of every man every morning, and whenever

it had been soiled by contact with excretions of the body, or by proximity to the dead.¹

Polytheism, pantheism, and monotheism have very distinct ethical leanings, which can be best perceived by an examination of representative systems under each of these heads. We have already taken Greek mythology as typical of all mythologies, and we will take Greek pre-philosophic ethics as representative of all polytheistic morals.

To the Greek, the *κόσμος* was also *οἰκουμένη*, of which the inhabitants were gods and men, living in republic. An inroad on the privileges of any one member of the polity produced discord, and peace and goodwill and happiness attended on a careful regard for the preservation of individual rights and the rendering to each his due—honour to whom honour, custom to whom custom, and tribute to whom tribute was due. Greek morality was consequently essentially social and political. As the eternal laws of the universe maintain the order of the world by the equilibrium of forces, so the moral laws limit the rights of each by the rights of others, and the adjustment of these rights is justice. *Δίκη* is the equilibrium of rights,² and holds the balance proportioning to each what is his due. Right and duty are correlatives which have no sense apart from one another; they are, in fact, the two aspects of the same idea. Right has also its forms, liberty and equality, or, as the Greek would call them, *autonomia* and *isonomia*, corresponding to the two forms of duty, courage and justice. Liberty defending itself against aggression is courage; equality maintaining itself against usurpation is justice. Justice

¹ Avesta; ed. Spiegel, Leipzig, 1852-59.

² *Δίκη* is derived, as is also *δίχα*, from *δύς*. It means properly equality, and thus *δίκην* is like to, equal to. See Aristot. Ethic. v. 7.

as right is *δίκη*; justice as duty is *δικαιοσύνη*. Courage and justice are the two great social virtues; courage is the essence and the attribute of man, *ἀνδρεία*. Justice is the guarantee of right, and courage is its safeguard; therefore duty is the affirmation and revindication of right.

The principle of polytheism is the independence of forces; in the universe and in human societies, order results from the concert of free wills; social right is based on individual right; the authority of law reposes on the consent of all. The city, the republic, *πόλις*, is a voluntary society which has for its normal conditions liberty and equality, the independence of each, but also the subordination of the individual to the whole. Law is not imposed by a will that is dominant and powerful upon feeble and yielding wills; not even by Divine power upon human weakness, but it is the free and spontaneous agreement among equals. In order that such co-ordination may be maintained, moderation, or consideration for others, becomes necessary. Do to others as ye would they should do to you is a maxim frequently insisted on.¹ "Do no ill to any one," says Theognis: "consideration befits the just." "Love those who love you," says Hesiod; "give to those who give to you."² When your neighbour acknowledges his fault, restore to him your friendship."³

In the early ages manual work was regarded as virtuous, because it conduced to the welfare of the state. According to Hesiod, it procures the favour of the Divinity on those who execute it with diligence;⁴ and this labour, which is the means of preserving life with honesty and modesty, he opposes with all his force to the criminal mode of gaining

¹ Hesychius: Bouzyges. See Creuzer: Orat. de Civit. Athen. p. 11; Isocrates: Orat. ad Nicocl. c. 61; c. 49.

² Works and Days, i. v. 284.

³ Ib. 330.

⁴ Ib. 213.

wealth—theft and rapine. Theognis says: “Choose rather to live righteously with small means, than to be rich, having gotten riches unjustly. In justice is all virtue collectively, yea, and every man, if just, is good.”¹

The sum of duties to a Greek was the merging of his personality in the state. The position he was to occupy in the community was not left to his arbitrary choice, but it was traced beforehand for him. Morality and virtue consisted in the conformity of the individual will to that of the body corporate; that was just which benefited the state, and that was heroic virtue, meriting canonization, which consisted in self-sacrifice for the good of others.

Beautiful and grand as is the ethical doctrine of Greek polytheism, as a system it is faulty. It viewed man only in the light of his relation to other men, and wholly omitted to see him in his relation to himself. Consequently there was no check provided against that immorality which is not political. He was ruled in his dealings with the commonwealth; he was free to do what he liked as an individual. The education of children in the paths of virtue, which was strictly insisted on by many ancient religions, was left arbitrary to the Greeks; and Aristotle rebuked them for allowing their children to grow up as wild as the beasts.² No incentive was held out to labour, and the maxims of Hesiod were forgotten. Herodotus wondered whence they had acquired their contempt for labour, whilst the barbarians actively encouraged the mechanical arts.³ Of twenty thousand Athenians, Demosthenes tells us, every one spent his time in the agora,⁴ for the first thoughts of the poorest Athenian citizen was to be idle, and trouble

¹ Theog. ed. Gaisford, v. 143-50.

² Pol. viii. 4.

³ Herod. ii. 167.

⁴ Demosth. Aristog. i. 51.

himself only with the business of state, and to be supported by the state.

Licentiousness knew no bounds, for religion had not attempted to check it. Few could be found who did not cheat the state as opportunities were afforded;¹ no one could trust his neighbour; and Greek shamelessness, wanton debauchery, cupidity, and lying became proverbial.²

This demoralization, if not due to the religion of the state, was at least not hindered by it. The morals of London may be no better than those of Corinth, but Christian immorality contravenes the emphatic ethical teaching of Christian religion, whereas the polytheism of the Greek set before the imagination gods committing every impurity and treachery which degraded that highly gifted people.³

If now we set ourselves to examine the ethics of the Scandinavian polytheist, we shall find evidence of similar moral workings; but in Norway the country passed through great political convulsions, disturbing the religion and the ethics of the people; and only in Iceland was the religion of the Æsir permitted to develop a commonwealth, hanging together on principles very similar to those of Greece. To the Norseman, as to the Greek, the race of gods was a race mightier than men, living together in peace and friendship by preserving laws the disturbance of which would break up the constitution of Valhalla, and precipitate the universe into chaos. So on earth, to each individual man belonged freedom as an inalienable right,

¹ Polyb. xviii. 17.

² Plin.: Hist. Nat. xv. 5.

³ Cf. Maury: Religions de la Grèce; Paris, 1859. Ménard: La Morale; Paris, 1860. Das Verhältniss der Moral d. Classischen Alterthums zur Christlichen, in Theologische Studien von Ullmann u. Umbreit; 24th year, 1851. Döllinger: Jew and Gentile; London, 1862.

and interference with the free action of another was morally wrong, because it disturbed the economy of the state. A man might kill another, but if he did so he must declare his name;¹ then it ceased to be a sin, and was a social delinquency, and passed into the courts of justice. The execution of justice, according to the Norsemen, lay with the injured person. If he revenged his wrong in secret, it disturbed the public welfare, for it left an act, in which the public had an interest, unredressed. The most prominent virtue of the Norseman was courage. This was occasioned by the peculiarity of his situation; on a shore bare and poor, he was forced to battle with nature, and harry the coasts of more fortunate peoples, to pick up a precarious subsistence. Free as the winds, he yet, like the winds, obeyed law. He elected his lawgiver, and bowed to his decision, without attempting to controvert it. Probably he saw that the bond of law decided on by the community was the guarantee of his own freedom. Robbery and piracy were honoured and respected, especially if the sufferers were the dwellers in other lands; but to creep into a man's house at dead of night and to spoil his goods was regarded as infamy of the deepest dye. Honour, straightforwardness, and manliness were the virtues of the Norse religion. To hold his own, to fear no man, always to do that which he would not blush to do before friend or foe; to be no trucebreaker, no talebearer nor backbiter; to be generous and courteous, hospitable and kindly; such was the ambition of the hardy Norseman, for such a character would ensure fame undying, and admission to Valhalla.²

¹ *Gisla Saga Surssonar*, p. 22; Copenhagen, 1849. In the *Droplaugasonnar Saga*, p. 11, it is said that the gods sent a storm to avenge a murder.

² Maurer: *Die Bekehrung d. Norwegischen Stammes*, vol. ii. pp. 148-188; München, 1856. Dasent: *Burnt Njal*, vol. i. pp. xxvii.-xxxv; Edinburgh, 1861.

Grand and noble was the scheme of Northern ethics, but it was deficient in the tender and holy virtues. It resembled the Greek scheme in its fundamental truths, the doctrine of individual independence, and of submission to the general welfare, but it broke down through an exaggeration of the virtue of courage. Courage was a necessity of existence with the Norseman when he lived on piracy, but when his energies turned to commerce it hindered the achievement of success; for, having no foreign foe to fight, and being bound to exhibit his courage, he resented the smallest injury done by a fellow-countryman with his sword, and his little republic of Iceland glared with burning homesteads, and smoked with blood.

The basis of monotheist ethics is altogether different. Submission is the key-note to all the moral harmonies of the monotheistic revelations of antiquity. It is taught that there is one God, independent, arbitrary, jealous of men, stern to avenge impiety. He reveals the truth that He is One to a peculiar people; and that people, fired with enthusiasm, zealous, and glowing with faith, affords the world an example of great virtue, and, at the same time, of great intolerance. Polytheism gives man no law within himself, this monotheism supplies. Polytheism unites man to man in a commonwealth, bound together by voluntary submission; monotheism grinds all men into one mass, and destroys independence of action.

We will take Mosaism and Islamism as examples.

According to the teaching of Moses, the groundwork of all good is not to be sought in man, as the Greek polytheist supposed, but in God: man does what is good, not because he is a member of society, but because it is God's will that he should do that which is right. Man is a member, no

of a republic, but of a monarchy; the officers exercise authority, not because it is confided to them by the people, but because they derive it from God. That acquiescence in law, which the Greek adopted as his chief virtue, is exchanged in Mosaism for absolute submission to law. The Greek obeyed law because his common sense told him it was for his own benefit that he should submit: the Jew obeyed because the law was given by direct revelation from God.

The Mosaic ordinances for worship and sacrifice were for the nation, not for the individual. There was to be but one general sanctuary for the whole nation, occupying a country some five hundred square miles in extent. No sacrifice, no prayer, was prescribed to the individual man, for individuality was merged in nationality. Mosaism was the religion of Jewdom, not of the Jew; and the Mishna and Gemara, minutely particularizing all the petty details of private ceremonial in acts of worship and acts of everyday life, followed out the spirit of Mosaism in reducing all roughnesses of individuality. Religion, to the Jew, was intimately and inseparably bound up with his life on earth. The hereafter to him, personally, loomed faint and without attraction, for the hereafter of Judaism was to be a triumph, not of the individual, but of the Jewish nationality. Moses, and also the Prophets, if they held the immortality of a soul created in the image of God, made little or no use of it as a lever of human action, nor did they point it out as the sole end and aim of human existence.

To live long and happily on earth was the summit of the Jew's ambition, and the attainment of this is the motive of his obedience to the law. In Mosaism there is no dynamic force. It could bring man into a condition of prosperity, in which each member of the community had enough to

eat, and a roof to shelter his head, but it gave no encouragement to enterprise in science, art, and commerce. It narrowed the interests of the Jew to his own people, and limited his energies to the maintenance of his material life. Believing himself to be the alone favoured of God, he looked with impatience on the Gentile, butchering him when he had the chance, and, when he had not, cursing and despising him.

The history of Mosaism is one of utter failure. It never took firm hold of the Jew till it was resolved into a complicated network of ceremonial. The revelation made by Moses met with small sympathy from the people in his own lifetime, and they only acquiesced in it during the life of Joshua and the elders who had travelled in the wilderness.¹ The period of the Judges is one of relapse into paganism. David revived Mosaism, but it was too insipid for Solomon, who fell into idolatry; and the kings, with few exceptions, were indifferent or adverse to the law. The temper of the kings reflected that of the people, and, with a certain amount of outward conformity, there was deep-seated and thorough apostasy.

The cause is not far to be sought. Mosaism was not a sufficiently personal religion to satisfy the wants of man. A great and noble mind will be fired with patriotic enthusiasm, and be ready to sacrifice itself to the welfare of the nation, and to live on in hopes of the ultimate glorification of his people; but the vast majority of minds are too self-centred and prosaic to live and suffer for such an idea. Men want some object of worship, and some individual hope. These Mosaism did not supply. Men could not worship an abstract God; though the duty of loving Him was urged upon them, they found it a sheer

¹ Josh. xxiv. 31.

impossibility. They could fear Him, and the attitude they assumed towards Jehovah was never one of love, but ever one of sullen dread. When He scourged them they sought Him, but the moment that they were relieved, their hearts turned towards gods more personal and human than Him of whom as an abstraction the idol-less Temple testified.

Mohammedanism is founded on pure deism. "God," says the Koran, "is eternal; He has not begotten, nor is He begotten. He created the world out of nothing."¹ He made man, affixed to each his lot, placed him in his proper sphere, and has determined how, and how long, he is to live. No human precaution can ward off the sentence of destruction pronounced by God. The will of God is supreme, and resignation to that will is the perfection of virtue. "From the sloth of the soul," said Montesquieu, "is born the doctrine of predestination, and from the doctrine of predestination is born spiritual sloth." One logical effect of this dogma is fatalism, indifference, and annihilation of energy. But another effect is intolerance; for the disciple of a revelation which declares predestination is convinced that for him alone is the world outspread, and that the rest of mankind are vessels of wrath made to be destroyed, and only suffered to exist to prepare and keep ready the earth for the service of the elect. "The sword," says the Koran, "is the key of heaven and of hell. One drop of blood shed in the Lord's battle, one night spent under arms, are of greater account than two months of fasting and prayer. He who shall perish on the battle-field shall obtain the pardon of his sins; at the Last Day his wounds shall shine like vermillion, perfumed as

¹ Koran, cxii.

musk, and the wings of angels and cherubim will replace the members which he shall have lost. Woe to him who goes not to the fight: his place shall be hell!"¹

When Khâlid, the Sword of the Lord, asked a prisoner what was contained in a packet attached to his girdle, "It is," replied the captive, "a poison to destroy my life should you prove intractable." "The moment of death is fated," said Khâlid; "it can neither be advanced nor retarded." So saying, he himself swallowed the poison. A sweat broke out on his brow, he vomited, and recovered himself. "If all Moslems are men like you," said the captive, "you will conquer the world."

The moral working of Mohammedan doctrine is admirably set forth by Mr. Palgrave, in its principle and in its application. "'There is no god but God' are words simply tantamount in English to the negation of any deity save one only," he says. "And thus much they certainly mean in Arabic, but they imply much more also. Their full sense is, not only to deny absolutely and unreservedly all plurality whether of nature or of person in the Supreme Being, not only to establish the unity of the Unbegetting and Unbegot, in all its simple and uncommunicable Oneness; but besides this, the words, in Arabic and among Arabs, imply that the one Supreme Being is also the only Agent, the only Force, the only Act existing throughout the universe, and leave to all beings else, matter or spirit, instinct or intelligence, physical or moral, nothing but pure unconditional passiveness, alike in movement or in quiescence, in action or in capacity. The sole power, the sole motor, movement, energy, and deed, is God; the rest is downright inertia and mere instrumentality, from the highest archangel down to the simplest atom of creation.

¹ Koran, iii. 151, 162; viii. 16; ix. 39.

Hence, in this one sentence, 'La Ilāh illa Allāh,' is summed up a system which, for want of a better name, I may be permitted to call the pantheism of force, or of act, thus exclusively assigned to God, who absorbs it all, exercises it all, and to whom alone it can be ascribed, whether for preserving or for destroying, for relative evil or for equally relative good. Thus immeasurably and eternally exalted above and dissimilar from all creatures, which lie levelled before Him on one common plane of instrumentality and inertness, God is one in the totality of omnipotence and omnipresent action, which acknowledges no rule, standard, or limit, save His own sole and absolute will. And, secondly, no superiority, no distinction, no pre-eminence, can be lawfully claimed by one creature over its fellow, in the utter equalization of their unexceptional servitude and abasement; all are alike tools of the one solitary Force which employs them to crush or to benefit, to truth or to error, to honour or to shame, to happiness or misery, quite independently of their individual fitness, deserts, or advantage, and simply because He wills it, and as He wills it. When God—so runs the tradition,—I had better said, the blasphemy—resolved to create the human race, He took into His hands a mass of earth, the same whence all mankind were to be formed, and in which they after a manner pre-existed; and having then divided the clod into two equal proportions, he threw the one half into hell, saying, 'These to eternal fire, and I care not;' and projected the other half into heaven, adding, 'And these to Paradise, and I care not.' Paradise and hell are at once totally independent of love or hatred on the part of the Deity, and of merits or demerits, of good or evil conduct, on the part of the creature; and, in the corresponding theory, rightly so, since the very actions which we call good or ill-

deserving, right or wrong, wicked or virtuous, are in their essence all one and of one, and accordingly merit neither praise nor blame, punishment or recompense, except and simply after the arbitrary value which the all-regulating will of the great despot may choose to assign or impute to them. In a word, He burns one individual through all eternity amid red-hot chains and seas of molten fire, and seats another in the plenary enjoyment of an everlasting brothel between forty celestial concubines, just and equally for His own good pleasure, and because He wills it."¹

The principle of pantheistic morals is, again, distinct. Nature is regarded as pursuing a definite end in every creative, or rather evolutive act, assigning to each thing a place and a destiny. Wherever a plurality of parts concur to form a general whole, dominant and subordinate elements present themselves; and this appears even in the inanimate realm, as in harmonies of colour, and of music. There is a key-note, or leading colour, to which the others subserve. But this is chiefly conspicuous in the constitution of man; in him each member has its part, and functionates according to the will of the soul. Were equality to be substituted for these modes of subjection, mischief would ensue on all sides. Not less evidently does nature announce the dependence of inferior on superior races of animals, and, in each race, the domination of the male over the female. The same law adjusts the relations of men in the commonwealth. To preserve equilibrium, the majority of men must be fools, and only the minority sensible; for the economy of society demands a co-ordination of manual

¹ Palgrave: *Arabia*, i. 365-368. I have been obliged to curtail this keen and thorough appreciation of Islamism.

labour and mental direction. Those who execute the manual labour, building houses, tilling ground, weaving cloth, are subservient to those who direct the affairs of state. The labourer is a living tool (*δοῦλος ἐμψυχον ὄργανον*); and Aristotle lays down, that the relation of master and slave admits of no rights, and excludes friendship:¹ that the well-being of the human race requires exposition of, or making away with, sickly and ill-made children, and even of the production of abortion.²

According to pantheistic doctrine, evil necessary ceases to have objective reality; Aristotle regards it as a want of proportion—now an excess, and then a defect of good; utility is virtue, and virtue lies betwixt opposite vices;³ consequently, virtue is proportion, and evil is want of proportion. Hence, too, evil only exhibits itself in this world of contingency and change, and has no relationship with God, as the first and absolute good has nothing that is His opposite.⁴

Spinoza, in the same manner, fails to establish his ethics on a logical basis. He denies moral liberty to God, and then as a rigid consequence denies it to man, and having destroyed his free will, he exhausts his ingenuity in subtle distinctions and plausible evasions, for the purpose of saving morality.

If free will be denied (and pantheism is necessitated by its principles to deny it), all moral law is at an end; no inducements are held out to man to be virtuous, no responsibility is felt for actions which are inevitable.

In the examination of ethical systems, it is far more important to ascertain the motive, and the object aimed

¹ Aristot. : Eth. Nic. viii. 11.

² Polit. vii. 16.

³ Eth. Nic. ii. 5.

⁴ Met. xi. 10.

at, than the means whereby this end is sought. Where there is no motive, the elaboration of a system is illogical and useless. Mohammedanism presents man with an object, temporal and eternal happiness, but gives him no motive to impel him towards it, for his fate is arbitrarily disposed of, and no acts of his own can assure to him felicity, or ward off misery. In thorough-going pantheism there is the same defect. Man is reduced to a machine, a manifestation of the living force of the world-soul; he is without aim, without independence, acting the little part for which he emerged into personality, and then subsiding once more into impersonality when his destined task is done.

In Judaism, the motive force is the fear of God, the object is temporal happiness, and the means whereby this is attained is submission to the Divine law.

In polytheism the motive force is desire of happiness, the object temporal happiness, and the means subordination to the well-being of the state.

The key to all moral activity is the desire to attain the greatest possible amount of permanent happiness. We instinctively avoid pain, but instinct is nothing but a sense of natural law. The law of nature is the happiness of the creature. We seek happiness with avidity, because it is as much a law of our being to strive for it, as it is to desire light and air. If we submit to endure pain, it is because we suppose that it will conduce to greater satisfaction. We permit the dentist to extract a tooth because we expect to attain to rest and ease by enduring a transient pang. The fakir thrusts hooks into his flesh, not because he loves pain, but because he has an ulterior happiness in view to which the hooks will conduce.

This search after happiness is self-love. Self-love is the mainspring of all action. It makes the cat catch mice and the man pay taxes. A man can no more avoid loving himself than he can avoid feeling. Sympathy is very often, though not always, a subtle phase of self-love. We sympathise with others in their joys and pains, not unfrequently because, by a species of delusion wrought by the imagination, we are enabled to feel their joys as if they were our own joys, and their woes as if they were our own woes. Consequently, want of sympathy is evidence of want of imagination.

Virtue is the judicious selection of that course of action most conducive to intense and permanent happiness, and the adoption of a line of conduct which is destructive to happiness is vice. As a compound being, man can derive happiness from two sources, the animal senses and the mental faculties. If he rejects the nobler spheres of pleasure for those that are baser, he is vicious; if he abandons sensual gratification for intellectual pursuits, he is virtuous, *because* the sum-total of intellectual happiness is greater than the sum-total of sensual happiness.

Virtue is selfishness acting with judgment: vice is selfishness acting ignorantly and blindly. A man gets drunk either because he does not know that intemperance is ruinous to his constitution, or because he has so little acquaintance with the laws of mental perspective as to suppose that a small present gratification is preferable to a great remote happiness, just as a child supposes the apple in his hand to be larger than the apple-tree at a distance.

Irreligion is very often due to defective imagination. Those who can, by an intellectual process, place themselves beside God, and view themselves relatively to Him, are religious; but those who have not sufficient imagination to

so conceive themselves, know of no responsibilities to God. Thus, irreverence, profanity, and indifference are so many exhibitions of mental imperfection. If we see our relations to man with great clearness, our self-love will make us considerate of others, for mutual forbearance and love is necessary to our happiness. If we are ignorant of the principles of solidarity, our egoism will be imperfect.

The state of our conscience at any given moment is the measure of our knowledge.

If every man were gifted with such faculties that he was able to view himself in all his relations at a glance, he would never transgress a law of physics, social economy, or religion, and there would be no such thing as immorality; pain would never be felt, because man would know perfectly how to avoid it. But as man is not so constituted, an appeal is necessary to his conscience,—that is, his fears and hopes, in order to prevent the utter disorganization of society and the disappearance of morality.

Nature wields her sword of flame, pointing every way; the experimental philosopher, and the sanitary commissioner, are her priests. In the social world, the state enforces those laws which are found to be conducive to the order and prosperity of the commonwealth.

Before natural philosophy and political economy were understood, religion undertook to rule man's actions in his physical and in his political capacities, but now science has brought sanitary regulation under its jurisdiction. When the state was regarded as divinely constituted, religion made it matter of conscience to obey, whereas now it is only matter of expedience.

But science and sociology cannot touch man in his relation to himself; all that they can do is to assure him that the happiness to be found in the crucible is higher in degree

than that to be found in the pint-pot. Here religion steps in and undertakes to encourage him with hopes, if he will expend his vital energy in the development of his higher powers, and deter him by threats appreciable by a coarse, animal nature, from resisting his spiritual instincts, and burying them in fleshly indulgence.

But, also, if there be a God, then man bears relations to Him, and his duties to God are of a private nature, and therefore not of interest to the state, and in no way coming under the jurisdiction of science. And what are the duties man owes to God can only be ascertained by a revelation, for they cannot be discovered experimentally.

Consequently, there are four spheres; the sphere of physics, that of politics, that of psychology, and that of theology.

In the early ethic codes all four were fused into one, and as a religious act man abstained from pork, obeyed the king, cultivated his mental and spiritual powers, and worshipped God. Now, religion is seen to embrace only the two latter provinces, and to rule man in his duty to himself and his duty to God.

CHAPTER XII

THE ORIGIN OF MONOTHEISM

The mode by which conclusions are reached not generally considered—Concrete terminology inadequate to express abstract ideas—Tendency of all religious systems to gravitate into Theism or Pantheism—First vague ideas of God—Polytheism, its logical difficulties—Escape in the direction of Monotheism—Absolute unity—Relative unity—The recognition of natural law—The idea of the unity of this law—The idea of transcendental knowledge—The idea of the unity of the Creator—The idea of the infinity of space, and of time—The idea of substance ; which is spiritual or corporeal—The idea of the unity of corporeal substance the basis of Pantheism ; that of the unity of spiritual substance the basis of Theism—Materialism—Theism and Pantheism not necessarily antagonistic.

MEN arrive at conclusions, very generally, without in the least knowing by what train of thought they have been led. The examination of the starting-point, and the connotation of the stages through which thought moves to the result, are commonly neglected.

In investigating the origin of monotheism, it will be necessary to follow the chain of thought which has conducted intelligent races to theism, though the several links have been as little observed as are the distance-posts past which the traveller is whirled to his destination, and which, even if seen, leave no sensible impression on his memory.

Two facts arrest our attention at the outset—the prevalence of monotheism, and the tendency of civilization towards it. Monotheism is at present the creed of a large section of the human race. The Christian, the Jew, and the Mohammedan hold the unity of the Great Cause, with varying distinctness, according to their powers of abstraction.

Language will ever be cumbered with a concrete terminology, and will present a certain uncouthness in the expression of absolute ideas; and we must guard against being led astray by the figures of speech which we employ to express ideas which language is incompetent to express with precision. Thought girds up its loins, and outruns language. The mind struggles to find expression for ideas which transcend terminology, and is obliged to lay hold of such words and phrases as are at its disposal, and use them as best it can; like the captive, who, longing for freedom, plaits the straw of his mattress into a rope, by means of which to escape from his dungeon. Science is hampered with a like inadequacy of language to express its meaning. To the child, the idea conveyed by the word “heaven” is one of place. He points to it; it is above his head; it is sprinkled with stars. When he is taught about the solar system, he calls that heaven. When he becomes a philosopher, he conceives heaven to be unlimited space. Child and philosopher alike use the term heaven, which signifies that which is “lifted or heaved up,” and is as crude and material an expression as could well have been adopted. When a monotheist speaks of God “sitting on His seat,” “hiding His face,” his idea is not necessarily anthropomorphic, but he uses metaphorical expressions without fear of being misunderstood by other monotheists, which

in the mouth of a polytheist would have a very material meaning.

The second fact we observe is the tendency shown by all religious systems that are in the hands of an actively intelligent people to gravitate into theism or pantheism. If we have here to go over ground already trodden, it must be pardoned; for in the examination of the springs of religious thought, we have to return again and again to the wild bog of savageism in which they bubble up. The recognition of Power uncontrolled by man has been shown to constitute the first religious idea. At that point it could not rest. At certain periods the movement in ideas is slow, and speculation is apparently at a standstill; but such periods are like the stress-points of a water-wheel: the movement is slowest because the greatest leverage is being employed, and that point passed, it revolves with accelerated velocity.

Through the dim perceptions of a bewildered intellect the primeval man saw confusedly piled up above him an awful Power, terrible in its might, vague in outline, and mysterious in its nature. Wherever he turned his eye it loomed on him, and seemed to threaten him with destruction.

At this first stage a great part of mankind still remains, its mind benumbed with fear. Throughout Central Africa, and along the snowy steppes of Northern Asia, this is the grade of intelligent conception of the Deity held by an untold population. In this conception there is no personality, no antagonism; and the life of the savage who holds this view is unrulèd by any moral code, unkindled by any hope of social or individual progress. He has no thought but for his day; his motives are drawn from his present necessities; he knows no past, cares for no future; lives only for the present, and that a present of animal

appetites. When the thunder growls, he grovels before it in abject terror, and screams prayers to it. When the sun is eclipsed, he rattled kettles to frighten the demons who is eating it. When serenity and sunlight return, his religious fervour disappears; born with danger, it disappears as danger vanishes.

But as civilization advanced, and with it a cultivation of the mental powers, man began to reason, not merely to perceive. He individualized powers, and classified them. His life was emancipated from the reign of terror, and as the witchery of the beauty of Nature fell on him, he cast himself in a rapture of love at her feet, and worshipped her in all her manifestations. He worshipped the sun, the earth, the trees, the winds. Little by little the objects of nature became personified and anthropomorphised, and he became a polytheist. But polytheism has a tendency towards monotheism. A less observant or intelligent reasoner would locate force in the object moved or produced; the more perspicacious observer would trace it to a single Will detached from the result. The former would place one intelligence in plants, another in water; the latter would attribute the impress on nature to a Divine Power, unfettered by matter, and uninvolved in it. The former would be a polytheist, and the latter a monotheist. But the polytheist is encumbered with endless difficulties, from which he can only extricate himself in the direction of monotheism. If a stream of water be endowed with a divine intelligence because it flows down hill, why not also every rain-drop that trickles down the wall? The same law that governs the river rules the rill, and is impressed on the rain-drop. Rather than admit such an absurdity as the deification of every aqueous particle, the rational polytheist escapes upward to the conception of

a divinity ruling all moisture. Again: he who lodged a divine being in every tree was logically bound to hold that a deity inhabited every lichen. To avoid such a *reductio ad absurdum*, he would take refuge in feigning a divinity governing all vegetation.

From a condition of belief in a polity of divinities ruling waters, vegetation, animal life, and winds, it was but a step to monotheism, to the attribution of all force and governance to one presiding God.

In the next chapter we shall sketch the history of the intelligent efforts made by philosophers of polytheistic creeds to reach Absolutism. We must now consider this tendency of the human mind towards unity, and endeavour to ascertain the cause of it.

In the constitution of the mind that cause will be found.

The unity of the sense of personality is an ineradicable conviction of man. The *I* which thinks, knows, perceives, is indivisible. I receive impressions through touch and hearing, sight and smell, of infinite variety; but the self which receives them remains ever essentially one. Impressions are as many coloured beads, isolated in themselves, but strung on the one thread of self-consciousness. The organs of the body are as so many telegraphic stations, which transmit sensations to the terminus of the mind. And as the self which receives impressions is one, so is the self one which sends forth streams of thought, wishes, and hopes. It is a centre from which all force radiates. If we try our utmost to analyse our individuality, we are unable to dissolve it into constituents. It remains an impressionable and active unity, absolute and simple.

But there is another unity perceptible to man, and that not absolute but relative. He has the faculty of seizing

the idea of unity in the midst of complexity, and of grouping phenomena together, and apprehending them as one idea. This is possibly a consequence of the unity of his own living, sentient self; in the consciousness of his own complexity, yet essential unity, he perceives a principle of unity underlying all complexity. I see an apple—that is, I perceive roundness, size, colour, position, &c.; but I do not perceive these as isolated facts, but in relation to one another, which relation is a bond uniting them into the one conception of apple.

In the objects presented to our senses there is no simplicity; they are all subjected to conditions; they have dimension, substance, colour, weight: but in our minds we have unity of perception, and this we apply intuitively, and resolve all composite sensible perceptions into the simple.

Thus there is a factitious unity as well as a real unity. The consciousness of self is a real unity, but the consciousness of the oneness of an apple is a factitious unity. We can form relative ideas of our own unity, conceiving ourselves as compounded of molecules of matter. Shylock, saying that he has “hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions,” forms such an idea; but when Descartes says, “I think, therefore I am,” his idea is simple. A chord struck on the piano conveys the impression of unity to the mind, but it is different in kind from that produced by a single note. A point is that which has neither length nor breadth. The mind conceives this idea, which is pure and unconditioned. A triangle is a plane figure contained within three right lines. The mind conceives the idea that it is one; but it is not pure, for the boundaries condition it.

The idea of Absolute Unity applied to religious con-

ceptions is the basis of theism; and the idea of Relative Unity is that of pantheism. God is the Great Cause, or the Great Result.

The perception of unity underlying all complexity is the incentive in man to progress in art and science; for science is the discovery of the laws which govern matter, and art is their application. Science gradually reduces laws in number, and perfect art is the application of the fewest possible laws to the largest number of instances.

A savage is shown a clock. He thinks that every wheel is alive; that is, he supposes a force to reside in each disc that revolves. When he has been taught to think, he points out to a brother savage that wheel B is set in motion by wheel A. As he becomes more instructed, he accounts for the movement of the whole assemblage of wheels by the weight. The savage sees day succeed night, and supposes that the sun rises for a run, and sets because sleepy. After he has been at school he finds out that the sun neither rises nor sets, but that the world rotates on its axis. The philosopher goes further still. He shows that day and night and the revolution of the clock wheels are all reducible to a single law—the law of gravitation. In complexity the mind seeks simplicity. It generalizes, and strives to discover the common in the various. The brute is limited to its sensations and the objects causing them. The fox looks up at the bunch of grapes and says they are sour. The child improvises a ladder and ascertains that they are sweet, for he has learnt to generalize. He has seen that in one instance a book that was out of reach was obtained by his father ascending a ladder; that a cobweb on the ceiling was swept away by the servant mounting a stool, and that a pot of jam on a high shelf was tasted by clambering to his brother's shoulders. All these facts he

reduces to a common law, that objects beyond reach may be apprehended by lessening the distance.

A cow is turned into a pasture field year after year, and wherever her droppings have rested, in the following spring the grass is greener and more delicious. She draws no inferences, but her master does. He sees in this a universal law applied, $A-x$ is not equal to A ; and therefore, when he takes a crop off a field, he restores to it in another form the constituents of which it has been deprived; that is, if $y=x$, then $A+y=A+x$.

Thus in the simplest matters of every-day life man recognises the presence of law. The moment he begins to reason, he perceives that these laws melt into one another, or rather are enfolded one within another, so as to lead him on to the conception of one law. It is with law as with idea. The eye may see from a mountain top a vast landscape, and the mind will receive the impression as an unity. The one impression embraces an innumerable multitude of the most varied objects. Then the eye may rest on the details and receive from them single impressions, which are transmitted to the mind as unities. So law may apply to the most varied phenomena, and yet law may not be many, but single, and one transcendental law may embrace all.

The ancient mathematicians studied the properties of the ellipse, whilst astronomers constructed theories of stellar motions; neither supposing that their respective sciences were related. Newton applies mathematics to astronomy, and the sun becomes a focus, and worlds glide along the course of the ellipse.

But we are venturing into speculation, beyond our subject. Sufficient for us that man perceives in the complex the presence of law, and that laws are reducible to fixed

principles, which principles lead to the conception of unity of truth. For laws are applied principles, and principles are truths, which truths the mind is led to regard as the facets of but one indivisible and resplendent truth.

In similar manner the mind is led up to the conception of a transcendental knowledge. As soon as men begin to study nature, however imperfectly, they are forced to observe the concatenation of all phenomena. The world of nature proves to be a delicate network, so that it is impossible to take up a single thread without being brought into relation with other threads. Every science is woven into every other science; not one stands by itself, but all, hand in hand, revolve in graceful dance around a single centre. Human knowledge consists in knowing several sciences; and the more it knows, the more it feels that it ought to know, in order to understand each science perfectly. The geologist cannot make way in the study of rocks without an acquaintance with botany and comparative anatomy, chemistry and dynamics; and each of these sciences swings between other sciences, without the knowledge of which it cannot be adequately known. And as men of small acquirements admire those of greater acquirements, so do those who know much conceive the perfection of knowledge to be a single mind embracing all, which can see all with one glance, and know all with one act of comprehension. But such a mind is not that of man, but of God.

We have seen that the cultivated human reason is led by sure stages to the conception of the unity of the power, truth, and knowledge of God; we shall next examine by what chain of thought it is brought to the belief in the unity of creative power.

The origin of the belief in causation, as has already been

shown, is to be sought in the idea of transition from non-existence to a state of existence. We conceive the universe as being. We conceive the idea of chaos, that is, of the non-existence of the universe. Not-being can never produce being. Out of nothing, nothing can arise. The conception of non-existence precludes the possibility of its giving birth to existence; therefore there must be a cause to create the universe. Let us take any being—A. In order that the principle of causality may be applied to it, it is necessary that it should have begun to be, and that it should not have existed before; for, if we do not suppose this beginning, A must have existed always. We can then assign a duration, in which A was not. Consequently we have in the order of duration a little series of two terms—

Not-A A.

To begin to pass from the first term, not-A to A. The principle of causality says, This transition cannot be effected without the intervention of a third term, B, which must be something existing. Not-A is a pure negation, and the contradictory term to A, so that, instead of the second being included in the former, they mutually exclude each other, and make the proposition "It is impossible for not-A and A to co-exist," absolutely true. Thus A cannot emanate from not-A; and consequently, without a real term the transition is impossible, even in the purely ideal order.¹ Apply this principle to matter, and we must account for its existence either as created or as eternal. With the doctrine of the eternity of matter we have nothing to do at present; it is a philosopheme, not a religious tenet. Now, if we suppose creation to be a con-

¹ Balmez : Fund. Philos. ; lib. x. cap. 6.

geries of distinct objects, a, b, c, d m, which have passed out of non-existence into existence, then we may suppose not-a, not-b, not-c not-m to have been created by distinct agents N, O, P Z. But if, as man is naturally disposed to reduce the complex to the simple, he supposes $A = a + b + c + d + \dots + m$, then B is the reality which causes $A = a + b + c + d + \dots + m$ to pass from not-being into being. Thus we have a single creator instead of a plurality of creators; one cause instead of many causes. It is arbitrary with man whether he chooses to view the universe as a whole, or as an assemblage of distinct elements; but Nature herself is ever exhibiting to him her unity, and his own organization is an ever-present witness to the same; so that he can argue from himself to the world outside by analogy. According as he views the universe, so is his creed monotheistic or polytheistic; but the polytheist, if he attempts to philosophize, or to study nature, is constrained to abandon his religious belief. The masters of thought in the classic ages broke with the popular creed in a plurality of gods, and settled into philosophemes of their own, resting on a conviction of the unity, either of matter, of substance, or of divinity.

Another simple idea in the mind tends towards monotheism; it is that of space. What is popularly meant by space? It is that in which substance can be unlimitedly extended. The idea of space is an idea of the indefinite. Infinity cannot be conceived, but it can be believed in. "By a wondrous revelation," says Sir William Hamilton, "we are, in the very consciousness of our inability to conceive aught above the relative and finite, inspired with a belief in the existence of something unconditioned, beyond the sphere

of all prehensible reality.”¹ Space has no boundaries beyond which it does not reach. The conception of a limit accompanies a conception of space stretching beyond it. If we suppose an infinite number of limits, we suppose at the same time space extending indefinitely beyond them. Astronomy tells us of stars which are probably centres of planetary systems, billions of miles away; but thought shoots past them into abysses unfathomed. The conception of distance is relative. Billions of miles are so many times a mile, and a mile is so many strides. But the idea of indefinite space is not relative, but absolute. The perception of a limit strikes across the conception of space, and affects one with a feeling of surprise. But limit cannot circumscribe space. A limit is that beyond which the object limited does not spread. But beyond all limits space *is*. The limit is a negation. Deny limitation to space, and you affirm its indefiniteness. What is finite is consequently a negative idea; and a finite being is a negation of an indefinite being.

But a positive idea precedes a negative idea; the conception of the indefinite must go before that of finality. Therefore the idea of the indefinite is necessarily present in every mind that can conceive the finite.

The indefinite, moreover, is indivisible. Infinite space may have parts in it discerned, and the interval subdivided; but the part articulated is no fraction, bears no relation to the whole, for, if it did, space would be finite. And if space be indivisible, it is a unity. Two or more infinite spaces cannot co-exist or coincide. Space must be one, and as an unity only is it apprehended by man. Thus the idea man forms of space leads him to the belief in unity. But space is not a vacuum. In it is the Deity, the sub-

¹ Sir W. Hamilton : Discuss. p. 15.

stance unconditioned. If there were many gods, each could not be infinite, for one would condition the other. One God can alone infinitely extend through an infinity of space.¹

The notions of time and space are closely allied, so that much that has been said of space will apply to time. Time is that in which we arrange our data of consciousness. As thoughts do not occupy space, so neither do objects occupy time. There is a distinction between time and duration analogous to that between space and extension. Duration implies something to endure, as extension implies something to extend. But we cannot conceive time devoid of anything to endure in it. As substances are situated in and take up space, so do events occupy time; but we can intellectually annihilate space, whilst time remains indestructible. There are other points of difference. All parts of space co-exist, but time is composed of successive parts. Space stretches in every direction, but time in two only—backwards and forwards.

There is this inconvenience in the use of the expression time, that it carries with it in common parlance a notion of limitation, that it is regarded as identical with duration. Let us take it in the popular sense, and for unlimited time employ the word eternity. Eternity is a positive idea, for time lies between the terms beginning and ending. Beginning is non-extension backwards, and ending is non-extension forwards. We can conceive eternity stretching

¹ I shall have in the second volume to speak of the attribute of infinity applied to the Christian idea of God, an attribute very different from infiniteness, which supposes substance, whereas the true infinite is above all such range of ideas as apply to space and time. But here I am speaking of the popular ideas of the infinite in space and time as originating monotheism.

far beyond the earliest beginning and the remotest ending: realize it we cannot; imagine it we cannot; but believe it we can.

Time is regarded by most people to be a reality, not a condition, a quality, a phenomenon. We believe that events are in time, not that time is in events; "that, while events are, or may be, contingent, so that they may be thought as non-existent or annihilated, the time which they occupied would still exist; that there is a remainder of time before and after every apprehended event, and before and after the sum of all such events: in other words, that events or changes do not fill time."¹ This positive, absolute idea of eternity, or indefinite time, being in man, he attaches to it his idea of God. As his idea of space led him to unity, so does that of time. Limitation is imperfection. What is limited is not absolute. But God is not imperfect and bound by the chain of necessity: therefore He is unlimited. He has no beginning, no ending either. If He had a beginning, He is no God, for then He is caused; that which has passed from a state of not-being to one of being, as has already been shown, demands a cause. God cannot be a term in a series: He must be one in whom succession exists; one who comprehends time, but is not comprehended in it. Eternity is not in time, but time in eternity. Although the idea of indefinite time does not logically exclude the possibility of eternal co-existence, yet such an idea is not acceptable to man. Where two or more objects exist, either in external or in internal presentation—that is, in the world of sense or in the world of ideas—he arranges them in a series. He gives to one object priority over the other, and often, though not necessarily, attaches to the first factor the no-

¹ Lowndes: *Philos. of Primary Beliefs*, p. 161.

tion of cause. Hence, the polytheist does not regard his gods as co-eternal, but arranges them in a theogony. Therefore they are not eternal, though they may be immortal. They are bounded in one direction. Apollo is born of Zeus, and Zeus is the son of Kronos. Ahura-mazda and Agra-mainyus start into contrast out of the bosom of illimitable time (*Zervána-akarana*).

If we consider the idea of substance as it presents itself to the intelligence, we shall find that it also directs the mind towards monotheism.

In scholastic, and indeed in common parlance, every object is supposed to have substance,—that is, “*id quod substat, remotis accidentibus*,” something which constitutes the being, distinct from other beings, of the object, in contradistinction to the accidents which are the qualities and appearances. The substance is that which remains constant whilst the properties vary. The object may be indefinitely modified, its accidents may undergo a total revolution, but the substance is the nucleus of identity which is invariable and indestructible. Thus my individual consciousness is my substance, though the accidents of my body change, and are indeed in constant flux. The caterpillar, the chrysalis, and the butterfly are substantially identical, though perceptibly different. I take a block of Carrara marble; I carve out of it a statue of Venus; then with hammer and chisel I mutilate the figure and reduce it to an inform mass. I know perfectly that under all these modifications there lies substantial identity. I know that the block, the statue, and the inform mass are not three distinct substances, for I observe a link uniting a variety of impressions into one, and that unity I call substance. The continuity of the impressions does not form the substance. The whiteness of the marble does not constitute

the identity, for I may tint my Venus without losing the sense of the substantial unity of the marble. I do not regard the impressions as the substance; I feel the block to be rough and the sculpture to be smooth, and I do not suppose roughness or smoothness to be that which constitutes the being of marble. This is denied by certain modern philosophers. Mr. Mill takes a rose: a determinate mixture of red colour, of a certain fragrance, and of softness of touch and the like, he says, is popularly termed a rose. "But what *is* the rose beside the colour, the form, and so on?" he asks. "Not knowing what it is, but supposing it to be something, we invent a name to stand for it. We call it a *substratum*. This substratum, when closely examined, is not distinguishable from cause. It is the cause of the qualities; that is, the cause of the causes of our sensations."¹ Whether there be a substance or not matters nothing to our argument. As a fact, men, the world all over, do believe in substance. To them a rose is not a cluster of qualities, but the qualities are the attributes of the rose.

Popularly, substance is detached from accidents, and distinguished from them by the idea of permanence inhering in it under modification. Popularly, substance is supposed to have real being, and the accidents to be but the medium, the ever-varying and transitory forms it assumes to become sensible.

Now substance can be conceived to be corporeal or spiritual.

Let us take corporeal substance first.

Corporeal substance is the essence underlying matter. Now, if the substratum be, as has been shown, permanent in the midst of change, then qualities are not essentials of substance; or, at least, the only quality from which it can-

¹ James Mill: Anal. i. 262.

not free itself is extension. Anyhow, substance is conceivable disengaged from its clothing of accidents. Science teaches us that in nature nothing is lost. Burn a candle. The chemist assures you that every atom that was in the tallow and wick still exists under another form, and in a different combination. The being of each particle is still extant. The diamond and common soot are substantially identical in the eye of the analytical chemist, but they are sensibly distinct. Thus the qualities may be wholly altered without affecting the substance. Substance is therefore without properties. The accidents of tree and rock and stream are put on and cast off arbitrarily; the substance of tree is indistinguishable from the substance of rock, or from the substance of stream. But if substance be unfettered by qualities, then all substances are alike, or rather, all substance is one. Hence the world is but a phantasmagoria of ever-shifting appearances, which flit around a central core of being. This train of reasoning is the key to pantheism. From this arose the philosophy of the Ionic, Pythagorean, and Epicurean schools, the theories of Lao-tse in China, those of Sāṅkya and Gautama in India, of Leibnitz and the modern pantheists in Europe.

The idea of spiritual substance is the basis of theism.

The conception of corporeal substance is derived from the consideration of the material world, that of spiritual substance from introspection. Thus, the first is a physical idea; the latter is a psychological one.

As soon as man turns from the observation of nature, and directs his attention on himself—that is, on his mental structure—he becomes aware that there is a spiritual substance within him analogous to the corporeal substance he supposes in nature. If the oneness of an object is unaltered, through however many changes it passes, so is it with

his mind. A stream of perceptions, notions, and volitions has flowed uninterruptedly over it from earliest childhood without disturbing its identity. He remembers, combines, compares, and reasons on impressions and thoughts which have been received at various periods of life, and under differing circumstances. The ideal world is in continual flux, yet the ideographic faculty remains permanent, otherwise how could it recall and reflect on presentations of the past? Unless the past and present be *en rapport*, the past would be a blank. Unless the man be identical with the child, he cannot recall the impressions of childhood. When five years old I saw a red rose; when fifteen I saw a white rose; when twenty-five I saw a yellow one: I then represent to my mind the red and the white ones. I can only do so because there is a continuity in the mind which received the three perceptions; otherwise it would be the same as though the three roses were seen by three distinct personages, and the presentations could not then be compared ideally. Unless there be a continuity of the substance of the mind, the phenomena presented to it by the senses would flash out of sight, and leave night behind them as black as the night that preceded them.

And not only must there be continuity of spiritual substance, but also a perfect oneness of perceptive power at the moment of perception. For if, instead of having one mind reflecting the lights admitted by the senses, I had three insulated consciousnesses, A, B, and C, I should be unable to unite the perceptions. Say, A perceived colour, B perceived form, and C perceived weight; then my ideas of the objects of nature would have in them no unity; they would be partial and fragmentary. If their perceptions were focussed on one convergent point, then that point would be the conscious self, and A, B, and C would be but

channels of sensation. Hence man has a conviction of the existence in himself of a spiritual substance, and of the unity of that substance.

The pantheist conjectures an ultimate corporeal substance, conditioning itself in nature. The theist conjectures a primary spiritual substance, whence all spiritual substances are derived. For he observes that the minds of men are homogeneous, that the difference in minds is not a difference in essence, but in receptivity of impressions and in powers of ratiocination. He observes that, just as his bodily frame resembles in its nature that of his brother men, so does his spiritual organization exhibit a homousia with that of his brother men. Relation implies community of origin. He therefore supposes all spirits to be derived from one spirit, not from many, or they would be diverse in kind, which they are not. That one spirit he supposes to be God. He argues thus. The members of my family derive their being from me. My brothers have large families, and the whole group of relations forms a clan. These brothers and I derive our being from our father, who had many brothers having families, and the whole group of these relations form the tribe. The father of the tribe was brother to the fathers of other tribes; these tribes together form the nation. The father of the nation was brother to the ancestors of other nations. All nations form the human stock, which thus derives from a primeval father.

This primeval parent was a compound of corporeal substance and spiritual substance, as are all his descendants. Whence did he draw his nature?

The earth is the palpable seat of matter, and that furnished him with his body. His spiritual substance he must have derived from God. Many religions have been

satisfied to speculate no further, and they deduce their genealogies of the human family from a primal Father and a primal Mother; the Father spirit, the Mother matter. But others have gone back another step. It has been argued that matter is inferior to mind: that matter is conceivable by mind; but there is no evidence that mind is conceivable by matter. Therefore, matter is produced by mind either by creation or by evolution; that is, the world is either made by God, or is the manifestation of God.

Materialism is derived from a reversing of the latter part of this argument. Mind or thought, it is contended, is the product of matter. The forces of nature meeting at a certain point produce a resultant, which is consciousness. The impact of one molecule of matter on another gives birth to thought as the spark flashing from the flint and steel. Intellectual effort is the corrosion of the brain by cerebrie and phosphoric acids; thought, therefore, like heat, is produced by the combination of bases and acids. Consequently, every chemical compound whilst in process of combination has consciousness, differing in kind according to the materials that unite. There is, therefore, neither cause, purpose, nor providence in the world. The philosophic materialism of Critias, who placed the soul of man in the blood; of the sophist Antiphon, who supposed an unconscious nature-power, blindly producing all things by haphazard change; of the Atomists, who held that all things consisted of the fortuitous concourse of molecules; and of the philosophers of the last century, is necessarily downright atheism.

Theism and pantheism are by no means so irreconcilable as they appear at the first glance; for this reason, that

pantheism stands on a sliding interpretation of the word substance. When it grasps the pure idea of a something underlying all phenomena, it verges on theism; but when it confuses substance with matter it envisages theism from a diametrically opposite point, for then it makes God, as has already been observed, to be the Great Result. Theodore Parker, with his usual vehemence and splendour of illustration, fell on the pantheists of the latter type as Samson fell on the Philistines of Ramoth-lehi, and smote them hip and thigh. "Their idea of God," he says, "is only the idea of the world of nature and of spirits as it is to-day; and as the world of nature and of spirit will be fairer and wiser a thousand years hence than it is now, so, according to them, God will be fairer and wiser a thousand years hence than He is now. Thus they give you a variable God, who learns by experience, and who grows with the growth and strengthens with the strength of the universe itself. According to them, when there was no vegetation in the world of matter, God knew nothing of a plant, no more than the stones on the earth. When the animal came, when man came, God was wiser, and He advanced with the advance of man. When Jesus came, He was a better God; He was a wiser God, after Newton and Laplace; and was a more philosophical being after those pantheistic philosophers had taught Him the way to be so; for their God knows nothing until it is either a fact of observation in finite nature in the material world, or else a fact of consciousness in finite spirit, in some man. Mr. Babbage, a most ingenious Englishman, invented a calculating engine. He builded wiser than he knew; for, by and by, he found that his engine calculated conclusions which had never entered into the thought of Mr. Babbage himself. The mathematical engine outciphred the inventor.

And these men represent God as being in just that predicament: the world is constantly revealing things unknown before, and which God had not conceived of. As there is a progressive development of the powers of the universe as a whole, and of each man, so there is a progressive development of God. He is therefore, not so much a Being as a Becoming."¹ But the same writer can say, "God is as much present in a blade of grass, or an atom of mahogany, this day and in every moment of its existence, as He was at the instant of creation. Every drop of water which falls from my roof in a shower, or from my finger thus, as I lift it in this cup, has as much the presence of God in it as when, in Biblical phrase, 'the morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy,' at the creation of water itself."²

The theist admits that God is everywhere present—present in earth, heaven, and hell, present in mind and present in matter; consequently, God may be regarded as the substance of spirit and the substance of matter. It is remarkable that St. Paul, whose views were in no way tinged with what is popularly regarded as pantheism, showed a readiness to meet the philosophic pantheism of the Greeks half-way, when he addressed the Athenians on the hill of Ares with the words, "In Him we live, and move, and have our being,"³ and when he wrote to the Colossians, God "is before all things, and by Him all things consist"⁴ (*τὰ πάντα ἐν αὐτῷ συνέστηκεν*).

¹ Theol. Parker's Works, xi. 107, 108.

² Ibid. p. 111.

³ Acts xvii. 23.

⁴ Col. i. 17.

CHAPTER XIII

THE HISTORY OF MONOTHEISM

The Semitic race and monotheism—Jewish monotheistic ideas gradually developed—Characteristics of Semitic progress—Shape finally assumed by Jewish theism—Jewish indifference to philosophy and science—Mohammedan monotheism—Calvinistic monotheism—Classic theism—Fate—Hindú monotheism—Traces of theism among barbarous races—Conclusion.

IT is the glory of the Semitic race to have given to the world in a compact and luminous form that monotheism which the philosophers of Greece and Rome only vaguely apprehended, and which has become the heritage of the Christian and the Mohammedan alike.

Of the Semitic race, however, but one small branch, Jewdom, preserved and communicated the idea. Every other branch of that race sank into polytheism. But from the first moment that Jewdom, floating down the stream of history, emerges out of obscurity, its cry has been, "Hear, O Israel: the Lord thy God is one Lord!" It has been the Moses of religious thought leading out of the Egypt of misbelief into the Canaan of truth, but not without many a wandering.

From its earliest growth to its latest stage, as a mental system it has stood out in trenchant contrast against a background of heathenism, through persecution, exile, and

anarchy, through every fluctuation of fortune, preserving the ark of its sublime idea, which antiquity wondered at but could not receive. When borrowing myth and rite from Phœnician and Philistine, Greece put not forth her hand to grasp this divine conception; feeling, possibly, that before it all her Dagon must fall.

It is, at first sight, inexplicable that Jewish monotheism, which was in time to exercise such a prodigious influence over men's minds, should have so long remained the peculiar property of an insignificant people. But every religious idea has its season, and the thoughts of men have their Avatars. It is as though fresh flowers cannot appear till those already blooming have expended their force: as though the drops of light in the night heavens must wheel in their course before the sun can arise and smite them with death.

It was apparently necessary that mankind should be given full scope for unfettered development, that they should feel in all directions after God, if haply they might find Him, in order that the foundations of inductive philosophy might be laid, that the religious idea might run itself out through polytheistic channels for the development of art. Certainly Jewish monotheism remained in a state of congelation till the religious thought of antiquity had exhausted its own vitality and had worked out every other problem of theodicy; then, suddenly thawing, it poured over the world its fertilizing streams.

Jewish monotheism has thrilled through Gentiledom, and everywhere has given birth to art, literature, and science. But, like an Alpine glacier, it hangs cold and barren above the flowery meadows which derive their beauty and their freshness from itself. In one of the Arctic expeditions an explorer kindled a fire by means of

a prism of ice. Jewdom has been that prism, giving birth to warmth but remaining cold itself.

Whence did the Jews derive their monotheism? Monotheism is not a feature of any primitive religion; but that which is a feature of secondary religions is the appropriation to a tribe of a particular god, which that tribe exalts above all other gods. "Where are the gods of Hamath and Arphad? where are the gods of Sepharvaim?" asked Sennacherib; "who are they among all the gods of these lands that have delivered their land out of my hand, that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?"¹ Such a condition of mind was exceedingly common. Joshua, far from denying the existence of other gods, makes it a matter of choice with the Israelites whether they will serve them or Jehovah: "Choose ye this day," he says, "whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."² "Among the gods there is none like unto Thee, O Lord," says David;³ and he exalts Jehovah above the others as a "King above all gods."⁴ Jacob seems to have made a sort of bargain with Jehovah that he would serve Him instead of other gods, on condition that he took care of him during his exile from home.⁵ The next stage in popular Jewish theology was a denial of the power of the Gentile gods, and the treatment of them as idols. Tradition and history point to Abraham as the first on whom the idea of the impotence of the deities of his father's house first broke. He is said to have smashed the images in Nahor's oratory, and to have put a

¹ Isa. xxxvi. 19, 20.

² Josh. xxiv. 15.

³ Ps. lxxxvi. 8.

⁴ Ps. xcv. 3.

⁵ Gen. xxviii. 20-22.

hammer into the hands of one idol which he left standing, as a sign to Nahor that one had destroyed all the rest.¹ The idea is said to have been put into his mind by others. Abraham was purchasing some idols, when a bystander said, "How can you, a man of seventy years old, worship things made with hands?"² "They have cast their gods into the fire," says Isaiah, "for they are no gods."³

It is a characteristic of Semitic progress, that it is spasmodic: Aryan religion is a gradual evolution, but Semitic religion rises by a series of sudden flights, followed by long tracts of conservatism or slow relapse. Prophetism, as M. Renan has remarked,⁴ is the form under which all the grand movements of the Shemites have operated; and in all the great religious revolutions they have undergone, a prophet occupies a conspicuous place as the motive agent. Such a prophet was Abraham, throwing Hebrew religion out of indiscriminate polytheism into what Professor Max Müller calls henotheism; and Moses cleared it still further of all heterotheism, and presented it to the people as monotheism.

But even Moses did not divest it of all those physical and concrete attributes from which it was purged by later Judaism. In its final and complete form, as a system, Jewish monotheism embraced four leading doctrines:—

1. The absolute being of God.
2. The absolute unity of His being.
3. The difference in kind of matter from God.
4. The subjection of matter to God.

Mosaism—by which name is here meant the Mosaic

¹ Koran Sura, xxxvii. 89; Midrash bk. Bechaji.

² There are several versions of this story. Talmud Beracoth. Abulfeda: Hist. Anteisl. ed. Fleischer, p. 20.

³ Isa. xxxvii. 19.

⁴ Hist. Générale des Langues Sémit. p. 8.

theory in its logical evolution—teaches that God is absolute being אהיה אשר אהיה, above the world which is of God, but which is not God. He is the unity of specialities, having the perfection of Being, therefore self-existent; unconditioned as to time, therefore eternal, having neither beginning nor ending; unconditioned as to space, therefore everywhere present; having the perfection of power, therefore almighty. In Him all specialities are resolved into universality, therefore He is incomprehensible. Thus there is no point in space, no atom of matter, in which God is not. Change indicates growth or decay, and God being eternal, there can be neither one nor the other in Him.

Matter is not evolved, but is created by God.¹ And matter is different in kind from God. Thus Mosaism is opposed to pantheism. Matter is finite, God is infinite; matter is dependent, God is independent; matter is changeable, God is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Matter is not the manifestation of God, but is the creature of God. First God, the Creator, then the universe, the creature. Chaos first, and then the conditioned called into existence by the unconditioned. Matter, light, expansion, are specialities appearing by virtue of the fiat of the Chief Cause; and at the head of creatures, the sum of specialities, is man, in the freedom of his will reflecting God, and by virtue of that free will standing with one hand on divinity and the other on creation.

Mosaism teaches that God is one: not one among many, but the only one; not one as the sum total of spiritual existences, but indivisibly one. All forces are deduced from Him as the sole force, all motion proceeds from Him the sole motor, all ideas are included in one transcendental idea, all laws involved in one supreme law.

¹ Gen. i. 1.

As a corollary to this proposition follows the unity of the work of creation, the unity of mankind. But to this legitimate inference the Jew was unwilling practically, or even theoretically, to give his adhesion.

Mosaism assumed a revelation. Man having been given free will, and therefore a possibility of erring from his true end, and thereby falling into destruction, on the hypothesis that God is very good it became a necessary consequence that God should make the truth known to those creatures endowed by Him with free will. But by limiting that revelation to his own people, the Jew was false to his premises. Thus revelation became an integral portion of the theory of Mosaism; it could only be dispensed with on the supposition that mankind was invested with a capacity for elaborating the truth from its own internal consciousness, or from the observation of nature—an assumption Mosaism refused to accept.

The Jewish mind was not a philosophical mind, nor did it exhibit anything approaching to scientific inquiry. Struck with the unity of the governance of the world, the Jew subjected it to one absolute Deity, and explained all phenomena by having recourse to His fiat. The will of Jehovah is the sword of Alexander cutting through every metaphysical, moral, and physical tangle. There is no interest attaching to the world and its phenomena, for they are arbitrary exhibitions of will; the existence of law ruling them is not hinted at in the Hebrew writings, but the utter worthlessness, the “past finding out” of physics is commented on. “I gave my heart to know wisdom,” said the Preacher, “and to know madness and folly; and I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit. For in much wisdom is much grief; and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.”¹

¹ Eccles. i. 17, 18.

Jewish wisdom is practical, not philosophical, and the only philosophy it cherished was elicited by contact with Platonism, and produced the Book of Wisdom and the writings of Philo.

Mohammedan monotheism is the offspring of Jewish monotheism. According to the Koran, God is all in all. There is but one God, one prophet, one empire. "God alone is worthy of being invoked," said Mahomet; "those who adore other gods adore them in vain, like to him who spreads his two hands towards water to bring it to his lips, but who never succeeds in obtaining it. Who is the Sovereign of the heavens and the earth? It is God. Will you forget Him to seek patrons incapable of defending themselves? Shall the blind be regarded as equal to Him who sees in darkness and in light? Will they give to God companion deities who are creators as God is a creator?"¹

The pure deism of Mahomet is imperfect as a working system, for it annihilates morality. Before the almighty power of God the creature is nothing. Man, ox, ass, are on a level; and if the notion be humbling to him, he may recover a little self-respect when he remembers that the archangels are in no better plight. Between man and God is a profound and wide abyss, and no bridge spans it. Too far above man to sympathise in any way with him, God can yet crush him with His jealousy. If man attempt to attribute to himself anything that is of God, and appear to encroach on His all-engrossing majesty by ever so little, the wrath of God is kindled and man is levelled with the dust. "It is," says Mr. Palgrave, "His singular satisfaction to let created beings continually feel that they are nothing else than His slaves, His tools, and contemptible tools also,

¹ Koran, xiii. 15, 27, 2, 3, 14.

that thus they may the better acknowledge His superiority, and know His power to be above their power, His cunning above their cunning, His will above their will, His pride above their pride; or rather, that there is no power, cunning, will, or pride, save His own. But He Himself, in His inaccessible height, neither loving aught save His own and self-measured decree, without son, companion, or counsellor, is no less barren for Himself than for His creatures, and His own barrenness and lone egosim in Himself is the cause and rule of His indifferent and unregarding despotism around.”¹

Alongside of Mohammedanism must be placed a parallel development in Europe, which, though nominally Christian, is intrinsically deistic. Consciously it was not so, but logically it was; and in its evolution it proved a striking counterpart to Islamism.

Zwinglius had taught that God was infinite essence, absolute being (*τὸ Ἐσσε*). The being of creatures, he said, was not opposed to the being of God, but was in and by Him. Not man only, but all creation, was of divine race. Nature was the force of God in action, and everything is One.² Sin he held to be the necessary consequence of the development of man, and to be, not a disturbance of moral order, but the necessary process in the development of man, who has no free will.³

Calvin's idea of God was quite as absolute as that formed by Zwinglius, but it was not so pantheistic, though he did not shrink from calling Nature God.⁴ The Deity was to

¹ Palgrave: Arabia, i. 366.

² “*Ut non frivola sit ea philosophorum sententia qui dixerunt omnia unum esse.*” (Opp. ed. Schuler, iv. 88, 89, 91, 92, 116, 121, 139.)

³ Id. iv. 101-112, 129.

⁴ Instit. Christ. I. v. 5.

him the Great Autocrat, whose absolute will allotted to man his place in time and in eternity. Beyond the pale of the Church, he taught, there was no remission to be hoped for, nor any chance of salvation, for the Church was the number of the pre-destined, and God could not alter His decision without abrogating His divinity. This doctrine, based on that of S. Augustine, but carried out to extremes and put into practice, is utterly and entirely identical with that of orthodox Mohammedanism. S. Augustine illustrates it by the case of a mother who has had twins. Each of these is a "lump of perdition." She overlies one, and it perishes unbaptized, to enter an eternity of misery; the other is baptized and is saved. An illustration surely startlingly analogous to the legend given by Mr. Palgrave, of the creation of the just and unjust.

Calvin succeeded in modelling a republic on his religious conceptions. It was a republic in the Jewish sense; all in it were equal, because all were so immeasurably below God, that difference of rank was imperceptible. He organized his republic into a theocracy. Everything was seen by him from its divine side, nothing from its human aspect. To resist God's will was profanity, to be met, not by argument, but by compulsion. The civil power in the state was subservient to the spiritual authority. The Word of God was the mould, and every human institution, all human life and liberties, must be crushed to fit it.

In casting about for the ultimate ground of the ethics of humanity, the logical mind of Calvin refused to rest in any intermediary causes, and rested moral action on the will of God alone. He swept away the sacramental system; if he held to Christianity it was in name, not in theory, for his doctrine excluded it as a necessary article. He deprived

the Atonement of its efficacy and significance, and he left the Incarnation unaccounted for, save by the absolute decree of the divine and arbitrary Will which he worshipped as God.

Although Mosaism must be regarded as the mother of Christianity and Islamism, yet classic antiquity, behind its imagery of myth, and above its pantheon, recognised—feebly and fitfully, it is true, but nevertheless really—the Unity of the Godhead; a fact sufficiently apparent to serve Christian apologists with an *argumentum ad hominem*. “When they swear,” says Lactantius, “when they frame a wish, or when they return thanks, they do not name Jupiter, but God.”¹ “We hear you openly and freely—with a freedom indeed not permitted to us—at home and abroad, express yourselves thus: ‘God grant! Please God!’ by which you not only confess that there is some One to whom you attribute all power, and to whom you look, but also you thereby deny the existence of other gods.”² An argument urged also by S. Cyprian, when he contends that such expressions as O God! God sees! I trust to God! God reward you! Please God! God grant!—expressions which, he says, are in every one’s mouth—prove that there is an instinctive belief in the unity of the Godhead.³

It is possible to form an almost complete system of monotheism from the Greek and Latin authors, which, if it does not prove that such a system had been precipitated into dogma, at least shows that it floated in the classic mind.

¹ Lact.: Div. Inst. ii. 1.

² Tertull. de Test. Animæ.

³ Cypr. de Idol. Vanitat.; also Arnob. adv. Gent. ii. 2.

God is said to be one,¹ unchangeable through all ages;² to be all-powerful;³ one who by speaking the word created matter;⁴ everywhere present,⁵ dwelling equally in heaven and earth and sea.⁶ A spirit, the author and creator of the universe, the maker and disposer of the heavenly bodies,⁷ the preserver of harmony,⁸ reigning in men's souls.⁹ Though invisible by men, He sees all things;¹⁰ no act is hidden from His sight.¹¹ He hates perjury,¹² and those who prevaricate.¹³ He is the disposer of all,¹⁴ giving man health, youth, and life.¹⁵ He exalts one and sets down another;¹⁶ in His will is happiness.¹⁷ To Him man owes prosperity, and success,¹⁸ and happiness.¹⁹ He whom God assists is able to do all things.²⁰ God gives courage,²¹ He recompenses virtue, and punishes vice.²² God shuns the wicked²³ and the passionate,²⁴ and refuses succour to the

¹ Soph. ap. Euseb. Præp. xiii.; Xenophon, ap. Clem. Alex. Strom.; Max. Tyr. Diss. i.

² Manil. Ast. i. 511: "Deus est qui non mutatur in ævo."

³ Linus ap. Iamblic. vet. Pythag. c. 28.

⁴ Herod. ap. Clem. Strom.

⁵ Menand. Frag. ex Aldo, 61: Παντῇ γὰρ ἐστὶ πάντατε βλέπει Θεός; Pind. Pyth. Hy. ii. 61.

⁶ Lucan, Phars. lix. 578.

⁷ Ovid, ap. Lactant. Div. Inst. ii. 5.

⁸ Ovid, Met. i. 47; Aristot. De Mund. ii. 1.

⁹ Phocyl. 106.

¹⁰ Philemon junior, Frag. p. 132; Plaut. Captiv. 319.

¹¹ Epicharm. ap. Clem. Alex. Strom.

¹² Phocyl. 15.

¹³ Ibid. 9.

¹⁴ Virg. Æn. iv. 561; Seneca, Thyest. 619.

¹⁵ Hom. Il. ix. 445.

¹⁶ Horat. lib. i. Od. xxviii. 13.

¹⁷ Menand. Sent. 250.

¹⁸ Æsch. Sept. c. Theb. 625; Virg. Æn. i. 199; iii. 715.

¹⁹ Soph. Ajax, 383.

²⁰ Menand. Sent. 237; Soph. Ajax, 765.

²¹ Hom. Il. i. 178.

²² Seneca, Herc. Jun. 384; Menand. 251.

²³ Menand. Sent. 252.

²⁴ Eurip. Orest. 708.

indolent; ¹ but He loves piety, ² and His ears are ever open to the prayers of the just. ³ The fear of God is above all other virtues. ⁴ In the remembrance of God is prosperity, ⁵ and by worshipping Him in righteousness and with a pure heart ⁶ one may attain to happiness. ⁷ God desires to be loved and honoured and worshipped of all, ⁸ for He loves men more than they love themselves. ⁹ Man, being created by God, is endowed by Him with a soul which instinctively acknowledges Him. "Among men there is no nation so savage and ferocious as not to admit the necessity of believing in a God," says Cicero, "however ignorant they may be as to what sort of God they ought to believe in. From whence we may conclude that every man must recognise a Deity who has any recollection and knowledge of his own origin. Now the law of virtue is the same in God and man, and in no other disposition besides. This virtue is nothing else than a nature perfect in itself, and wrought up to the most consummate excellence. There exists, therefore, a similitude between God and man." ¹⁰

"Whenever man thinks clearly or feels deeply he conceives God as self-conscious unity," says Carrière; and thus it is that in Greek and Latin classics, and in the religions of barbarous peoples even, the idea of the unity of God lightens down, as sunbeams on an overcast day pierce the clouds, and, falling on earth, glorify each object they touch.

There is another form in which the Divine unity appears in many religions, and that is as the Necessity, Fate, *Διὸς*

¹ Menand. Sent. 242.

² Ibid. 246.

³ Ibid. 146.

⁴ Ibid. 53.

⁵ Ibid. 118.

⁶ Publ. Syr. Sent.

⁷ Menand. 229; 142; Philem. Frag. 90.

⁸ Phocyl. Carm. 6; Menand. 230.

⁹ Juv. Sat. x. 250.

¹⁰ Cic. de Leg. i. 8.

Βουλῇ, sometimes merged in Zeus, "whose ways are unforeseen, imperceptible, and secret," sometimes confounded with Providence. According to Pindar, that which Fate decrees is that which is established by Zeus:—

Καὶ τὸ μόρσιμον Δίῳθεν πεπρώμενον ἐκφέρειν.¹

Between the doctrines of free will and fatality Greek philosophy, like monotheistic religion, is condemned to oscillate perpetually. In Homer, gods and men are subject to fate. When Cræsus sent to the oracle at Delphi to inquire whether gods might be ungrateful, the answer given was, that it was impossible even for a god to escape the fate marked out for him by destiny.² In Æschylus, the idea of fate appears with remarkable prominence. It is a power invincible, which presides over all the revolutions of the world, over success and reverse; changing at will, through caprice or justice, despair into joy, and triumph into disaster; from its throne high above gods and men, where it reigns despotic, shedding blessings and curses, joys and sorrows, recompenses and punishments. Though an abstraction, it becomes a sort of living and acting divine person. In the ancient poets, the divinities themselves urged man into evil, but in Æschylus evil is the struggle of the human will against the Divine will, and in the midst of his headlong career that Divine will and power restrains him.³

As in Mohammedanism and Calvinism, so among the ancients, this doctrine acted disastrously on morals. In presence of a destiny fixed and intransgressible, there was no refuge for ethics. Man would curse his fate, and act

¹ Nem. iv. 60.

² Herodot. i. c. 91.

³ Patin : *Etudes sur les Tragiques Grecs*, i. 33. Camboulien : *Essai sur la Fatalité*; Paris, 1855.

as his passions urged. He needed to take no precautions against danger, and when he suffered he had but to transfer the blame from himself to fate :

“ Fatis agimur, cedite fatis,
Non sollicitæ possunt curæ,
Mutare rati stamina fusi.
Quidquid patimur mortale genus,
Quidquid facimus, venit ex alto.”¹

The Norseman, also, above his region of gods placed an inexorable fate, to which not men only but gods were obliged to bow.

“ All is fore-ordained,” “ Luck is fore-appointed,” “ There is no resisting fate,” are maxims recurring again and again in the ancient Sagas.² “ That must happen,” says the *Holmverja Saga*, “ which is fore-determined.”³ “ What must be, will be,” says the *Svarfdœla Saga*.⁴ “ Man must follow his destiny,” says the *Thorfinns Karlsefnis Saga*.⁵ To every man his death day was doomed, and no possible precaution could save him. Over the gods the same fate hung. The day of Ragnarok, the twilight of the gods, was hidden from their eyes, but that day was immutably fixed in which the universe, with all it contains, gods and men, would fall into ruin, and then, at the decree of the same mysterious fate, would rise renewed and beautiful.

In India, where the worship of a host of gods diverts the religious sentiment into a number of channels, and fritters it away in ceremonial trivialities, the idea of the unity of the Godhead is held, though not applied. A poet in the

¹ Seneca, after Soph. *Œdip.* v. 980 *et seq.*

² As, for instance, *Sigurdakv* : *Fafnisbana*, i. 23, 24, 52, 53. *Helga Kv.* *Hundingsbana*, ii. 26. *Orvar-Odds Saga*, c. 32. *Njals S.* c. 6 ; c. 13 ; c. 104. *Vatnsdœla Saga*, c. 10.

³ C. 29, p. 90.

⁴ C. 22, p. 174.

⁵ C. 6, p. 135.

Veda asserts distinctly: "They call God Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Agni; then He is the well-winged heavenly Garutmat; that which is One the wise designate in many ways as Agni, Yama, Mâtariçvan."¹ And again: "In the beginning there arose the Source of golden light. He was the only born Lord of all that is. He stablished the earth and this sky;—who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice? He who gives life, He who gives strength; whose blessing all the bright gods desire; whose shadow is immortality; whose shadow is death. Who is the God to to whom we shall offer sacrifice? He who through His power is the only King of the breathing and awakening world. He whose power these snowy mountains, and the sea, and the distant river proclaim. He whose are these regions as it were His two arms. He through whom the sky is bright and the earth firm; He through whom the heaven was established—nay, the highest heaven; He who measured out the light in the air. He to whom heaven and earth, standing firm by His will, look up, trembling inwardly. He over whom the rising sun shines forth. Wherever the mighty water-clouds went, where they placed the seed and lit the fire, thence arose He who is the only life of the bright gods. He who by His might looked even over the the water clouds, the clouds which gave strength and lit the sacrifice. He who is God above all gods. Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice? May He not destroy us—He, the creator of the earth; or He, the righteous, who created the heaven. He who also created the bright and mighty waters. Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?"²

But not to Vaidic times alone in India belonged a notion of a supreme and sole God. God, say the Brahmans of

¹ Max Müller: *Ancient Sansk. Lit.* p. 567.

² *Ibid.* p. 569.

Coromandel at the present day, is the principle and the cause of all. He created all by His power, preserves all by His goodness, and in the end of ages will destroy all. He is God alone.¹ He is eternal, immaterial, everywhere present, independent, infinitely happy, exempt from pain and care; He is pure truth, perfect justice, supreme God. When a young Brahman receives his cord, his father says to him privately: "Remember, my son, that there is but one God, the sovereign master and principle of all things, and every Brahman is bound to worship Him in secret."²

Among the barbarous races of Africa and America, from behind the veil of myth flash occasional gleams from the face of the One God;—occasional only and very uncertain, and productive of no apparent result. The negro tribe of Kojas are said to give the name of Kanno to a being whom they regard as the universal creator, and to whom they attribute unlimited knowledge, and an infinity of nature filling all space.³

The Issinis in like manner recognise a supreme God, whom they call Anghioume.⁴ The people of Kongo, Loango, and Mandongo call Him Desou, the Heaven God; Desou-kata, the sole God; Zambé, the Spirit; or Zambé-an'pongu, the Supreme Spirit.⁵ The Gallas believe in one God, who created all things, and who will judge all men, and to whom they give the name of Wak, or Iwak.⁶ Dr. Livingstone, writing of the people towards the mouth of the Zambesi, affirms that they have a clear idea of a Supreme

¹ De Marles : *Hist. des Indes*, ii. 47.

² Dubois : *Mœurs des Indes*, i. 225.

³ *Hist. Gén. des Voyages*, xii. 379.

⁴ *Ibid.* xi. 313, 319; xiii. 452.

⁵ *Nouv. Annales des Voy.*, 1st Series, x. 399.

⁶ Lefèvre : *Voyages*, vol. i. p. xv.

Being. That Being is "named Moruno, Molungo, Reza, Mpámbe, in the different dialects spoken. The Barotse name Him Nyámpi; and the Balonda, Zámbe. All promptly acknowledge Him as the Ruler over all."¹ The Kafir tribes have also some faint idea still lingering among them of a "Great-Great," and a "First Appearer;" and in one district of Natal the "Great-Great" is actually worshipped.²

In America, beginning at the south, we find the Patagians acknowledging a God whom they call Toquichen, or the Governor of the people, that is, of men.³ In Chili, and among the Araucanians, the names given to the Deity are, Pillan, from *pilli*, soul, meaning the Spirit *par excellence*; Hnenou-pillan, the Spirit of Heaven; Eutagen, the Great Being; Vivennvoe, the Creator of all; Molghelle, the Eternal; Aunonolli, the Infinite; and Ngen, the Being.⁴ In Peru, where nature worship prevailed, a gleam of monotheism shot athwart the polytheism of the Incas and then disappeared. In 1440, at a grand religious council held at the consecration of the newly-built temple of the sun at Cuzco, the Inca Yupanqui addressed the assembled multitudes in these remarkable words:—

"Many say that the sun is the maker of all things. But he who made should abide by what he has made. Now many things take place during the absence of the sun, therefore he cannot be the Creator. And it is very doubtful whether he is alive, for his trips do not tire him. Were he a living thing, he would grow weary like ourselves; were he free, he would explore other parts of the heavens. But he is like a tethered beast who runs his daily circuit

¹ Missionary Labours, pp. 641, 642.

² Shooter: Kafirs of Natal, p. 160; London, 1857.

³ Montravel, Voyage, i. 283.

⁴ Ann. de Phil. Chrét. xxiii. 182.

under a master's eye ; he is like an arrow going whither he is sent, not whither he wishes. I tell you that he, our Father and Lord, the Sun, must have a Lord and Master more powerful than himself, who constrains him to run his daily round without pause or rest."¹ To express the greatest of all existences, a name was coined, and a temple to this Supreme God was erected, in which he was to be worshipped without images and human sacrifices. But the Inca was ahead of his age, and when this temple was visited by the Spaniards in 1525, they found it occupied by a hideous human idol of colossal proportions, of painted wood, to which the votaries addressed their prayers.²

It was the same train of thought which led Thorkellmani, the Iclander, to bid his sons bear him forth on his deathbed into the sun, that he might die commending his soul to him who had created that luminary.³

" Now, therefore, O my children, do this thing I ask—
Transport me through the doorway in the sun to bask.
Upon that bright globe gliding through the deep blue sky
Gazing—thus, and only thus, in comfort can I die ;
For chambered here in darkness, on my doubts I brood,
But in the mellow sunlight I feel that God is good ;
A God to mortals tender, the very fount of light.
Not Odin, whose whole glory is to booze and fight.

* * * * *

Away with Thorr and Odin ! To Him who made the sun
I yield the life He gave me, and which now seemeth done.
Then through the doorway bear me, my lads, that I may die
With sunlight falling round me, my face towards the sky." ⁴

In Tezcuco, Nezahuatl, its prince, undertook a reform in

¹ Bilboa: *Hist. du Pérou*, ed. Ternaux Compans, p. 62. See also Garcilasso de la Vega, *Hist. des Incas*, lib. viii. c. 8.

² Brinton : *Myths of New World*, p. 56.

³ *Landnáma Bok*, lib. i. c. 9.

⁴ "The Silver Store," by S. B. Gould, p. 25 ; 1868.

the direction of monotheism. He had long prayed to the gods of his forefathers for a son to succeed him, and the altars had smoked vainly with the blood of human victims. At length his confidence in the national gods broke down : "In faith ! these gods that I am adoring are nothing but stocks and stones, without speech or feeling. They could not have made the beauty of the heaven, the sun, the moon, and the stars which adorn it, and which light the earth, with its countless streams, its fountains and waters, its trees and herbs, and its various inhabitants. There must be some God, invisible and unknown, who is the Universal Creator. He alone can console me in my affliction, and remove my sorrow." Sustained by this conviction he erected a temple "to the Unknown God, the Cause of Causes," and ordained that it should never be polluted with blood, nor should a graven image be admitted within its precincts.¹

A legend of the life of Abraham, though no doubt utterly unhistorical, yet accurately portrays the process of reasoning by which many an intelligent heathen has risen above the idolatry and nature worship of his race.

Said Nimrod to Abraham : " You will not adore the idols of your father. Then pray to fire."

Abraham : Why may I not address myself to water, which will quench fire ?

Nimrod : Be it so : pray to water.

Abraham : But why not to the clouds which hold the water ?

Nimrod : Well, then, pray to the clouds.

Abraham : Why not to the wind, which drives the clouds before it ?

Nimrod : Well, pray to the wind.

¹ Prescott : *Conquest of Mexico*, i. 192, 193.

Abraham: Then, why not to man, who can stand up against the wind, and who can build it out?¹

In Texas the natives told Joutel in 1684, that they believed in one unseen Spirit, who concerned himself in no way with what went on below. and to whom they neither offered prayer nor sacrifice.²

From this brief review of the chief monotheistic creeds of ancient and modern times, from which review Christianity is excluded, as its doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation remove it from the class to which Mosaism, Islamism, and Calvinism³ belong—I draw these conclusions:—

First, That absolute theism, divested of anthropomorphic ideas, is intolerable to the religious instincts of humanity; and that theism interests and attracts the devotion of men only inversely to the absolutism of the conception.

Secondly, That the only mode monotheism has of maintaining itself, is by resolving itself into fatalism. As a predestinarian, autocratic system, it powerfully attracts men, and holds them together by a bond of bigotry, whilst it saps their morality.

Thirdly, That monotheism has a tendency to narrow the mind, to destroy sympathy, to arouse intolerance; that it has done nothing for science, for art, and next to nothing for literature, other than sacred. Jewish speculations—and the same may be said of Arabic philosophy—are not indigenous; they are wholly due to Greek influence. What art the Jew possessed was borrowed servilely. What art

¹ Book of Jubil. in Ewald: Israel. Gesch. iii. 3.

² Journ. Hist. d'un Voyage de l'Amérique, p. 225; Paris, 1713.

³ I class Calvinism with these deistic religions, apart from Christianity, as in it the doctrines peculiar to Christianity have no logical standing.

the Arab possessed was elicited by contact with Spanish or Oriental Christianity.

But, *fourthly*, Monotheism provides morality with a strong and stable foothold. Mohammedan and Calvinistic monotheism divest man of responsibility; but Jewish monotheism is free from this vice. What is necessary for the conservation of society, is a code of easily intelligible laws of morality, applicable to everyday life, and based on irrefragable authority. This code can be obtained in two ways, either by revelation or by induction from accurate observation. It must be enforced either by state authority or by divine authority.

A man of thought will not steal because he knows that he is violating a law of sociology; it matters nothing to him whether that law reaches him directly by a revelation, or indirectly by study of the science of social economy, for the law is written by the same hand, in one case on stone tables, in the other on the fleshy tables of the heart. He will not indulge in sensuality, because he knows that by so doing he will be using up and wasting that vital force, limited in amount, which may be directed to the evolution of brain. But the vast majority of men care nothing for the principles which govern philosophers, and the only law they will recognise is one direct from God. The law governing the sage is every whit as truly a law of God, but it is reached through an analysis of statistics. This the ordinary man of the world objects to; the statistics are not complete, the analysis is faulty; contingent circumstances have not been taken into account, which would modify or alter the law, or at least weaken its cogency. But a revealed law is plain and straightforward, and to that he will acquiesce—through idleness, maybe, but more generally through mistrust of the other.

It is also in vain to attempt to base a system of ethics upon pantheism. Pantheism may be found sufficient to supply a faith adequate to the awakening of wonder and love of the beauty and mystery of nature, but not to the practical consecration of life; it is impossible to persuade men—the bulk of men—to feel responsibility to hypostatized laws that neither know nor can speak to them. The verities of nature and the designs of nature are words, and nothing more, when brought to bear on morals. When their gloss is gone, no residuum of duty remains. “In his crimes,” says a writer in the *Westminster Review*, with exquisite beauty and truth, “it is not the heavy irons of his prison, but the deep eye of his Judge, from which he shrinks; and in his repentance he weeps, not upon the lap of nature, but at the feet of God.”¹

¹ New Series, vol. ii. (1852), p. 183.

CHAPTER XIV

PANTHEISM

Theories to account for the existence of the world—The atomic theory—The evolutive theory—The dualistic theory—The theory of Pyrrhonic idealism—The theory of Hegelian idealism—The theistic theory of creation—The phusitheistic theory of emanence and immanence.

THE world either exists, or it appears to exist.

If we suppose that our senses convey to us true impressions, we must hold that the world has being.

On the supposition that the world has a positive existence and is not a mere phantasm, the questions arise, For what purpose, and, By what means does it exist?

The first of these questions we shall dismiss from consideration; it has been hotly debated over, but it has not formed the basis of religious teaching. The second question has given rise to religious and philosophic cosmogonies, which are endeavours more or less successful. Among all these hypotheses which we shall review in order, some are no longer tenable, but they have had their day; and as the scoria of speculative eruptions in past ages, they had an interest in our own.¹

The first hypothesis is that the world is eternal, uncreate, and self-existent; that it is a fortuitous aggregation of as many different substances as there are different existences;

¹ *Essai sur la Philosophie*, par Labruguière; Paris, 1862.

that these are held together in a certain order by physical affinities, inherent in their nature. Matter being from everlasting, the properties being fortuitous, and the arrangement of matter being accidental, there is, and can be, no God, for there is no purpose, no cause. "The solar system has a sun and numerous planets; they are all distributed in a certain ratio of distance; they move round the sun with a certain velocity, always exactly proportionate to their distance from the sun: this holds good with regard to the nearest and the farthest. They move in paths of the same form; they are ruled by the same laws of motion; they receive and emit light in the same way. The laws, which are the constant modes of planetary operation, when we come to study them are found to be exceedingly intricate; yet they are uniform, and the same for one planet as for another; the same for a satellite as for a planet. They are perfectly kept, and so uniform in action that if you go back to the time of Thales, five hundred years before Christ, you can calculate the eclipse of the moon, and find that it took place exactly as the historians of that day relate; or you may go forward five days, or five years, or five thousand years, and calculate with the same precision. So accurate are these laws, that an astronomer studying the perturbations of a remote planet, the phenomena of its economy not accounted for by the attraction of bodies known to be in existence, conjectures the existence of some other planet which causes the phenomena not accounted for. Nay, by mathematical science he determines its place and size, inferring the fact of a new planet outside of the uttermost ring of the solar system; at a certain minute he turns his telescope to the calculated spot, and, for the first time, the star of Leverrier springs before the eye of conscious man."¹

¹ Parker: Works, vol. xi. p. 7.

This manifest order and perfection in the universe the atheist sets himself to account for thus.

True is it that *as far as we know* everything seems inimitably ordered, but that proves nothing but that we know of no other ordering. A disturbance of the present economy of nature would throw matter into an entirely different arrangement, and to those who did not know that with which we are acquainted the new system would seem perfect. Men suppose the world to be a machine, and then they require a constructor; they say a bird lifts or depresses its tail to regulate its flight, therefore the tail has been contrived for the purpose of facilitating the motions of the bird in the air. But this is begging the question. The bird employs its tail because it happens to have one. Man not being thus endowed, does not think a tail could advantage him. A bird can do no otherwise than fly; fly it must, because flight exhausts its power and expresses its nature, not because it was created for the purpose of flying. A bird uses its wings and tail as a man uses a gun. A quadruped does not fly, because it has not the means of flying; it runs or leaps, precisely as a savage, not having firearms, makes the best use he can of bow and arrows.

Atheism, whether true or false, is repugnant to moral and political economy, for it necessarily destroys the idea of morality. If there is no law in the material physical world, there can be none in the social and the spiritual worlds. The desire of obtaining intense and permanent happiness, which is the motive force in ethics, is a delusion; every motive for self-restraint is removed, for the idea of an object for which to strive is rejected, and the notion of a retributive justice is derided.

According to the second hypothesis, the world is held to

be eternal and uncreate, but instead of its being regarded as an aggregate of diverse substances lumped together by chance, it is supposed to be a regular development of a primordial substance, in which the phenomena of nature are modes of expression. It is a *natura naturans*, a perpetual becoming, having a life which displays its energy in exhibition; out of which all things flow, but into which they return. The world is a circle of existences ever revolving, bringing now some to the surface and then others, devoid of intelligence and self-consciousness. It is, in fact, material force.

The prime essence of the world is called God. He is the substance and link of cohesion of matter, the law of life. But He is immutable, fatal. He is not Creator, for creation implies will and intelligence, and these are denied Him. Out of Him the world emerged, and out of the world the various activities and objects filling it are developed by the life inherent in the substance, just as the herb puts forth bud and flower by virtue of its inherent vital force.

The great substance is being, absolute being, which is all being, and outside of which no being can be conceived. This substance has attributes which express the essence of substance. But as this essence is infinite, the attributes must also be infinite, not absolutely, but relatively. Thus, thought is an attribute of being: therefore, it is infinite. But thought is not extension, which is also a manifestation of being, and consequently an attribute of substance; therefore thought has only a relative infinity. As substance is infinite, the attributes must be numerically infinite. Infinite attributes have their necessary modes of expression. Extension is expressed by figures; thought by ideas. These modes are necessarily limited, or finite. Apply this

to the material universe. All its phenomena are the finite modes of the infinite attributes of infinite substance. This substance is the Absolute. It is without liberty, intelligence, and will. Modification it cannot desire; its modification is no act of will, but of inherent necessity. One of its developments may benefit man, another may hurt him; but in the great Absolute there is no purpose of doing good or evil to man, who rejoices or suffers subject to the law of inevitable fate. This system oppresses man with fatalism. He has no liberty, no intelligence. His every act is an evolution of the motive force, in obedience to a law hidden from his eyes. He loses his individuality. Nature projects him into the world subject to conditions that he cannot evade, and when his little clockwork course is run, he sinks back into her womb, and merges his personality in the life of the *τὸ Πάν*. There is no more possibility of man overstepping the law of his life than there is of a beast resisting its instincts, and of a herb refusing to grow. He has no free will. The beast has a slight curve along which its will is suffered to vibrate; man has a more extended arc for his oscillations, that is all. Consequently, there is not such a thing as virtue or vice. Morality presupposes two conditions: first, that man is capable of regulating his life; secondly, that there exists a moral law to which man can conform his actions. Both these postulates are denied by the material pantheist. Consequently, morality is annihilated. Religion is also annihilated. For religion demands an object of worship, and a motive urging to worship. Even if we allow the absolute essence of matter to be an object, no possible motive can be assigned for inducing man to adore it; as it is unintelligible and fixed immutably, and can therefore neither will to assist him, nor had it the will could it leave the rut of necessity to help him.

A crucial difficulty in material pantheism is this. If the great Substance is constrained by law, that law must be impressed on it from without, or it must have bound itself. If impressed on it, then there is a power above substance: If it bound itself by law, then it is intelligent, and free to will.

The third hypothesis is dualistic. God and matter are both eternal and uncreate. Matter does not emanate from God, nor is God immanent in matter. There are two principles—a primordial substance and a supreme force. The primal matter, the “mother of that which is to be,” is imperceptible by the senses; it receives its determination, motion, and limits from the Idea, which is active force, or God. This first substance, transferred into a state of motion by the impress of force, swayed into order, and surged into shape. Without the idea, substance is barren, but influenced by force it fructifies into palpable being. Thus the world is organized by the Deity out of pre-existing material, as a sculptor forms a statue out of a block of marble.

God and substance are juxtaposed, and by virtue of that juxtaposition, in a purely mechanical fashion, the organized world is produced. God, the idea of the objective world, is the cause of the form, or mode, of the visible and finite, but not of its existence. Thus the universe is made, not created. From God it derives its plan and harmony; through matter it partakes of the contingent and evil. Thus spirit and matter are in a sense opposite poles; and, as spirit and matter co-exist in the phenomenal world, in nature co-exists good and evil

The fourth hypothesis is that of the Pyrrhonic idealist.

Des Cartes and all philosophers who followed him saw that the existence of the objects of sense is by no means self-evident, and that the reality of our perceptions demands proof. This had been perceived long before by Pyrrho of Elis and the new sceptics; and they had denied the possibility of attainment to objective truth. It was afterwards adopted by Bishop Berkeley, with modifications of his own.

According to the idealistic theory, there is no matter; sun, moon, and stars, earth and sea, our own bodies, and those of our friends, are nothing but ideas passing through our minds, and they have no objective reality and existence. Substance, accident, and extension are modes of thought, not properties of matter. Consequently, the only world that exists is that of ideas; the only existences are minds and thoughts.

But how are ideas impressed on the mind? Stilpo of Megara, who disallowed the objective validity of generic conceptions (*τὰ εἴδη*) and the truth of those judgments which are not identical, regarded them as clouds obscuring the mind, probably as arising from a dissolution of the mental unity, and therefore of disorder, and he made the character of a wise man to consist in apathy or impassibility. But Berkeley argued differently. As spirit is the only existence, man can perceive nothing but his feelings and representations! but as he certainly is not the cause of these, it is no less certain from their multiplicity and variety, as well as from their harmony and consistency, that they are communicated by a spirit, and by a spirit of infinite perfections—God.

The fifth hypothesis is that of the Hegelian idealist. What we call the laws of nature are more pro-

perly the forms of our intelligence applied by us to phenomena.

Thought and being are one: nature is thought objected. The object and the subject are one, and this oneness is the absolute science to which the mind rises as to its absolute truth, and the truth is grasped that pure *Esse* is pure conception in itself; and that pure conception alone is true *Esse*. Thought bears this relation to reality, that the real is that which alone is rational, and the rational is that which alone is real. Consequently, being and thinking, existence and consciousness, are really identical. The idea is the basis of philosophy. The idea has three elements, conditions, or moments. It *is* and *is not* at one and the same time, because it *becomes*. This contradiction is the basis of its being; it is the fulcrum of a lever, of which one pole is force, the other not-force. It exists in and for itself, having two moments equally opposed, the idea *in itself*, and the idea *out of itself*. Consciousness existing in the soul is thrown into contact with the not-I, and the idea elicited by the contact is thought.

Contradiction is the basis of being; for the idea is the synthesis of the thesis and the antithesis. Every idea encloses a contradiction, and this contradiction not only exists in things, but constitutes them.

The extreme of heat and the extreme of cold are opposed poles and equivalents. Perception lies between them. Objects equally illumined can no longer be distinguished, and this uniform day is precisely equivalent to night. Thus light implies its contradictory, obscurity; not only does it suppose its opposite, but it engenders it, and whilst producing it, it realizes itself, and the product is effective light.

The idea is the synthesis of truth, goodness, beauty,

which are the thesis, and of falsehood, evil, and the ugly, which are the antithesis. Its nature consists in the conciliation of antinomies. All our ideas are quantitative; they have consequently opposite extremes, betwixt which exists a point which conciliates them. The absolute is the non-difference of differends, the identity of the being and the not being. This identity is only conceivable as the becoming, the middle point between them.

Consequently, the absolute becomes. The filiation of ideas of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis is a process. The development of the idea is the unrolling of a series of processes. The idea exteriorizes itself, continually objecting itself, and thus enters into the antithetical moment; it ceases to be *ousia*, and passes to *heterousia*. The being of the idea is as yet undetermined and unparticularized in distinct forms. The emergence of particularities becomes the essence or truth of being, synthesizing the idea in itself for the idea out of itself.

Nothing exists that is not object of thought. Thought alone gives beings their value, nay, their material reality.

If we suppose an intelligence higher than that of man, the idea of that intelligence will be more perfect and its world more perfect than man's ideal world. Thus, as every one sees his own rainbow, so does every man live in his own world. Law in nature is due to the conception in the mind of the idea of law governing nature. Nature is the assemblage of laws projected from the idea *in itself*, which *for itself* are materialized. God, then, like the world, is a creation of thought, for the mind is absolute, and the mind is God.

Such I believe to be a fair *précis* of the doctrines of Hegelian idealism; but, in following the thoughts of modern German philosophers, the difficulty of arresting

them and reducing them to a clear and easily intelligible system is extreme; the moment one fancies that a thought is assuming precision and outline, it throws out a cloud of ink, like the sepia, and leaves the pursuer bewildered and in the dark.

The sixth hypothesis is that the world is created, but created by an arbitrary God, indifferent to His work, and to whom it was a matter of indifference whether He created or did not create.

This hypothesis is not pantheistic. It disengages God from matter, and is truly theistic. It shall, however, be considered in this place, that the reader may have a synopsis of the various theories by which the existence of the world has been accounted for.

God is distinct from the universe. He is a complete and self-sufficing Being, autonomic and free. His will is law. He is bound by no necessity, and is therefore absolute master of His actions. The foundation of His activity is not to be sought in the perfection of His nature, but in His will. Truth and right are only true and right because He chooses them so to be. The three angles of a triangle are not equal to two right angles because this is a necessary truth, but because God has decided that so it shall be.

Creation is thus an act of God's free will, without necessary foundation in His essence.

So also, the conservation of the world is only a continuous co-operation of the eternal will with the creative will. This *concursus* depends wholly on God's arbitrary choice; it can be suspended at any moment, and then the universe drops into annihilation.

In what light is this world, so created, to be regarded?

As long as we were engaged with material and ideal

pantheism, no such question could arise. For, the world being held to exist eternally and fatally, and to be the only possible world, it must needs be the best possible. Pantheism is, therefore, necessarily optimism.

As long as this world is regarded as a fortuitous concurrence of pre-existing matter, in which there is no design, no aim, it is quite possible that another arrangement of atoms would have been better; nay, more, as the world is full of physical ills, these are attributable to the imperfection of the arrangement of the material of the world. Materialism is, therefore, not necessarily, but generally, pessimism.

But when the creation of the world is regarded as an operation of free will, it is conceivable that other worlds might have been, and may be, created better or worse than the existing world.

We have no data upon which to ground a belief that this world is either the best possible, or that it is the worst possible world.

The seventh hypothesis is that the universe is the creation of infinite wisdom operating in love; that there are two attributes in God conditioning one another—liberty and necessity. Creation, reflecting this nature, is at once free and necessary. Pantheism gives us an absolute God, anthropomorphism gives us a personal God, materialism supplies a link of cohesion. Fuse the ideas, absorb materialism in pantheism, and pantheism in theism, and the result is what I may call phusitheism. Reasoning from final causes, the existence of a Creator is obtained; for the presence of mind working in nature is demonstrated. It is a clear and satisfactory proof to the ordinary understanding of man; but it proves nothing more than a finite God. If

this idea be supplemented by another obtained by ontological argument, the result is an infinite God, impersonal and yet personal, immanent in nature and yet not of or by nature, omnipotent and omniscient, influencing and moulding the material world, which is in Him, and He in it.

God can be seen in His creatures, for He communicates Himself to man through nature; He is in the works of creation by His essence, which is that by which they have their being; He is in them by His power, as principal cause giving motion. Thus it is God who enlightens through the medium of the sun, warms by the fire, and nourishes through bread. God is present in every force of nature—in heat, electricity, magnetism, attraction, gravitation. It is not that heat, electricity, &c., are God, but that light, heat, electricity, &c., are the effects of the presence of God, effects of His action on the bodies He has given us. Thus, all creatures are to us sacraments, or outward and visible signs of the invisible being of God, veiled under them. "What do I see in nature?" wrote Fenelon; "God—God everywhere, God alone."

CHAPTER XV

THE HISTORY OF THEOSOPHY

The task undertaken by philosophy—Theism and pantheism—1. Greek philosophy—The Ionic school—Heraclitus—The Atomists—Empedocles—Anaxagoras—Pythagoræans—Eleatic school—The Sophists—Socrates—Plato—Aristotle—Epicuræan school—The Stoics—The New Sceptics—The Neoplatonists—2. Indian philosophy—Brahmanism—Sankhya philosophy—Buddhism—3. Chinese philosophy—Confucianism—Chinese dualism—Taoism—4. Christianity—5. Modern philosophy—Descartes—Leibnitz—Hobbes—Locke—Hume—Kant—Fichte—Hegel—Conclusions.

WE have seen in the preceding chapter that there are seven hypotheses whereby the existence of the world is accounted for. All these attempts at solving a difficult problem are philosophemes.

Religion and philosophy are inseparable. In the former sentiment predominates, in the latter reason. Religion is the representation of an idea more or less philosophic; it is always the expression of a thought; often it is unconsciously philosophic.

The task undertaken by philosophy is inquiry into the fundamental reason of things; and in proportion to the degree of development attained at any given period, does it express the idea of the divinity more or less perfectly.

In tracing the history of philosophic speculation, we rise above the region of mythologic fog into the pure ether of reason. It must not be forgotten that the conceptions of philosophy are the same as those which energize religion, but in the latter form they are broken and refracted into rainbow tints.

Our review must be necessarily very cursory, in a work of the limits imposed on this, and it shall be directed mainly to theistic and pantheistic speculations of great thinkers, in ancient and modern times.

One important school of thought has not been alluded to in the foregoing chapter, and it must be dismissed here with a few words. It is that of the Positivists, which accounts for nothing, and rejects all attempts at solving the problem of the universe. Hitherto, they say, and not without justice, hypotheses have been erected without facts to establish them, theory has preceded experience. Therefore they reject all hypotheses, attempting to explain nothing beyond the cognizance of man. The data of facts cannot be brought to bear on the origin of matter, therefore it is idle to speculate on what is incapable of demonstration.

The religions of the past, and those of heathendom at the present day, are either theistic or pantheistic or both conjoined. Heathenism rests on two fulcra, spirit and matter; and in it spirit worship and element worship co-exist, touch and interpenetrate. Mental constitution, local causes, or habits of life develop one phase at the expense of the other. The Turanian has leaned heavily to the side of spiritualism, and the Aryan to that of naturalism.

Pantheism may be distinguished from Theism, as the enunciation of the consubstantiality of God with nature. Matter and essence are two faces of the same truth, which

truth is God. God is nature attached to its immanent principle, and nature is God in the evolution of His power. The divine is supposed to be in constant progress of development. God sleeps in the mineral, dreams in the animal, wakens in man. He is transubstantiated in the universe, and humanity is a necessary manifestation of the absolute.

Pantheism is the philosophy of reason ;—of reason, it may be, in its impotence, but of such reason as man is gifted with here. Regarding the universe as a fact, the mind seeks to explain it. It must offer as its explanation either a personal God or an impersonal God. The former theory is that of the Theist, the latter of the Pantheist.

In all unphilosophic religions there is a strong pantheistic bias. The great spiritual essence is regarded as pervading the universe, palpitating in the ocean, flickering in the stars, rustling in the forest leaves, germinating in the herb. God is the aggregate of spiritual existence and of material being. The soul is an atom of all-pervading eternal substance, emerging, for a brief period, like a sound breaking out of stillness, and then dying back into the silence of primeval spirit. Anything is an object of worship, for everything is God. Such is the rude pantheism of the Turanian, the African, and the American Indian. But at the same time the personality of the Deity has been so keenly felt, that primitive religions have always shown a marked tendency towards emphasizing the Deity, and investing Him with vigorous anthropomorphic personality, and this has withdrawn a large group of religions out of the pantheistic sphere.

We shall now follow these ideas through the systems of philosophers.

I. GREEK PHILOSOPHY.

1. THE IONIC SCHOOL (6th Cent. B.C.).

The first effort of Greek speculation to find the cause of existences was purely naturalistic (*ἐν ὕλης εἶδει μόνας ὡγήσαν ἀρχὰς εἶναι πάντων*).¹ Matter was with the first philosophers the original principle (*ἀρχή, στοιχείον*), whether it were water, as taught by Thales, or air, as supposed by Anaximenes and Diogenes of Apollonia. Anaximander of Miletus considered the principle of all things to be a substance in infinite space, of undetermined form, in which the motive force indwelt, and out of which, by a process of separation of opposites, individualities were formed. This infinite substance was, he said, immortal and imperishable, and he designated it, hylozoistically, the Deity.²

2. HERACLITUS OF EPHEBUS (500 B.C.).

The experimental observation of the continual flux of nature (*πάντα ῥεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει*)³ inspired the notion that the essence of all things lay in perpetual modification. The world, according to Heraclitus, is eternal (*οὐτέ τις θεῶν οὐτὲ ἀνθρώπων ἐποίησεν, ἀλλ' ἦν καὶ ἔστιν καὶ ἔσται*),⁴ but it is a whirl of ever-shifting phenomena, an eternal emergence and disappearance, and it was well said of this philosopher that he swept repose clean out of the world. The universe rose out of fire, and will dive back into fire to become renovated and renew its precipitate career. It had no beginning, and it will have no end. It is one, as a river is one, but without living unity of being. That which Heraclitus calls God is the life of the aggregate of substances, undergoing

¹ Aristot. Met. i. 3.² Aristot. Phys. i. 4.³ Plato: Cratyl.⁴ Clem. Alex. Strom.

change, in obedience to a law of necessity,¹ which is however logic (ὁ ξυνὸς λόγος).² Man, according to Heraclitus, is only a transitory phenomenon in the universal becoming;³ and his negation of individuality obliges him to reduce conscience and personal independence to an illusion.⁴

3. THE ATOMISTS. LEUCIPPUS AND DEMOCRITUS (500 B.C.).

The materialism of this school is of the most pronounced character. It is not pantheistic, for the idea of divinity is expelled from its hypothesis of the universe. In the eyes of Leucippus and Democritus, matter is inert and passive, and if bodies exist in combination, it is through a succession of shocks (πλήγαι) repeated through eternity.⁵ Consequently the world is not an unity, immutable or in process of development, but is an agglomeration of an infinite number of eternal atoms, invisible, and insecable (πρῶτα ἀπλὰ σώματα, πρῶτα μεγέθη, στοιχεῖα, ἄτομα),⁶ and without original connexion or bond of union (τὸ δὲ οὐκ εἶναι ἐν, ἀλλ' ἄπειρα τὸ πλήθος, καὶ ἀόρατα διὰ σμικρότητα).⁷ The universe being the result of chance combinations, there is no law either in physics or in morals. The object of life is happiness, and life is devoid of responsibilities. The soul is an aggregate of fiery atoms, and when these atoms have reached a proper temperature they evolve thought; right thought is the product of high temperature, but excess in heat or cold makes thought unintelligent.

¹ Plut. Plat. Phil. i. 27.

² Sext. Emp. adv. Math. vii. 133.

³ Sext. Emp. Pyrrh. Hyp. iii. 320.

⁴ Heraclitus : in Zeller's "Philosophy of the Greeks," i. 450—490 ; also see "Fragments of Heraclitus" in "Museum der Alterthumswissenschaft," 1808.

⁵ Cicero : De Nat. Deor. i. 12, 29.

⁶ Aristot. De Gen. An. v. 8.

⁷ Aristot. De Gen. et Corr. i. 8 ; Phys. iv. 6.

Though the intervention of divine power was not postulated in the moulding of the universe, yet the existence of divinity was not wholly denied. The Atomists taught that the gods were systems of round igneous atoms, which had attached themselves to finer bodies than those of men. These deities became visible to men through the images ever flowing from them.¹

4. EMPEDOCLES OF AGRIGENTUM (440 B.C.).

The system of this remarkable poet-philosopher is thoroughly pantheistic. He taught that the world was composed of the combination and dissolution (*μίξις* and *διάλλαξις*, *σύγκρισις* and *διάκρισις*) of four eternal elements, fire, air, earth, and water. To explain the double movement, he had recourse to two principles, that of combination (*φιλία*, *ἁρμονία*, *Ἀφροδιτή*) and that of dissolution (*γείκος*, *δῆρις*, *Ἀρά*). These two powers form one. Nature is an unity of love and hate. The world has a life and soul, self-conscious, divine; a holy will flying in swift thought.² Phenomena are produced by the reciprocal operations of the two forces. Hate detaches objects from the primal unity and objects them into being, and love resolves them back again into the original essence.³

5. ANAXAGORAS OF CLAZOMENÆ (530 B.C.)

In opposition to the doctrine of Empedocles, this philosopher conceived that in the universe there was nothing conflicting and unintelligent. The animator and former of the world he held to be incorporeal (*ἄσώματον*), an im-

¹ Sext. Emp. adv. Math. ix. 34.

² Ibid. i. v. 359-363.

³ Fragments of Empedocles in Karsten: Philos. Græc. vet. Reliquiæ, vol. i.

material spirit (*νοῦς*), whose action produced order and harmony in chaos.¹ This spirit he did not regard as divine, and indeed he carefully avoided calling it God. He supposed that all matter was penetrated by this *nous*, which was the principle of life. It was diffused throughout the world, energizing nature, intelligent, individual, wise. By it the world was not created, but was moulded out of pre-existing material (*πάντα χρήματα ἦν ὁμοῦ· εἶτα ὁ Νοῦς ἐλθὼν αὐτὰ διεκόσμησε*).²

The philosophy of Anaxagoras is important as being a first effort to rise above the materialism of the atomic and Ionic schools; and Aristotle well remarks of him that he appears, in comparison with those who had preceded him, as a man of reflection among those who had none.³ Although he preceded Empedocles chronologically, philosophically he succeeded him (*πρότερος ὢν τούτου, τοῖς δ' ἔργοις ὕστερος*).⁴

6. SCHOOL OF PYTHAGORAS (525—300 B.C.).

According to the cosmology of the Pythagoræans, the world is a closed ball, in the centre of which is a core of fire. Around it lie three regions with ten globes; the heaven extending from the earth to the moon, the cosmos from the moon to the fixed stars, and Olympus, the region of the gods, beyond. God (*ὁ θεός*) is the supreme cause, the creator (*γενητὸν ὑπὸ θεοῦ τὸν κοσμόν*)⁵ which He rules, and to which He communicates His eternal and imperishable nature. This God is supreme intelligence, the *νοῦς*, with-

¹ Plat. Phæd. 105.

² Plat. Crat.; Aristot. Phys. viii. i. 5; Met. i. 3.

³ Plut. Pericl. iv.

⁴ Arist. Met. i. 3. See Fragments of Anaxagoras collected by Schaubach; Leipz. 1827.

⁵ Plutarch de Placit. Philos. i. 2; ii. 4.

out passions, inaccessible to the senses, nor capable of change, conceivable only by the intellect.¹ Pythagorean philosophy is theistic, not pantheistic.

7. THE ELEATIC SCHOOL. ZENOPHANES, PARMENIDES, ZENO OF ELÆA. (6th and 5th Cent. B.C.)

The effort made by the Pythagoreans to distinguish the essence of being (τὸ ὄν) from phenomena (τὰ φαινόμενα) was pursued by the Eleatic school. If the Ionic school had occupied itself with the empirical perception of phenomena and by the mouth of Heraclitus had stipulated that the πάντα ῥεῖ, or the *becoming*, is the principle of philosophy, the Eleatic school started from the contrary assumption, that the *Being* (τὸ ὄν) is the principle of all (πάντα ἐστάναι—ἐν καὶ πάν).² According to Zenophanes, the world is not only the continual development of one substance, as taught the Ionians, nor the eternal becoming, as said Heraclitus, nor the agglomeration of atoms, as Democritus pretended, nor is it fashioned out of pre-existing material, according to Anaxagoras; but it is one in all, an unity of multiplicity, whether spiritual or material is not clear, but held by Parmenides to be pure idea (τὸ γὰρ αὐτὸ νοεῖν τε καὶ εἶναι,³—χρή σε λέγειν τε νοεῖν τ' ἐὼν ἔμμεναι),⁴ Thinking and thought are identical, and the absolute unity does not permit the admission of the real existence of a plurality of things, and of a world in continual movement. Consequently, the visible world is illusion. Idea exists; the phenomenal world is an acosmism.

But a distinction must be drawn between the tenets of Xenophanes and Parmenides. The former maintained that

¹ Plut. Numa. 8.

² Plato, Soph.

³ Aristot. Met. i. 5, 21.

⁴ Parm. ap. Procul. in Plat. Timæ.

God was absolute intelligence and insight, seeing, hearing, thinking, acting in His essence. This God he identified with the world power, so that by the ancients he was regarded as pantheistic.¹ Parmenides, followed by Zeno and Melissus, denied all being save that of Idea. "To think, and the object of which the thought is, are one and the same," he said (τὸ γὰρ αὐτὸ νοεῖν ἐστίν τε καὶ εἶναι).²

8. THE SOPHISTS.

Hitherto, Greek philosophy had questioned the Universe as the object of knowledge, asking whether it were matter or spirit, plurality or unity, a becoming or a being. It underwent a new phase as soon as philosophy turned from the object to the subject, and took man as the theme of its researches. "Man," said Protagoras of Abdera (born 430 B.C.), "is the measure of all things;" that is, to man that alone is true which appears to him at each moment to be so. "Of the gods I know nothing, neither whether they be, nor whether they be 'not; for there is much that stands in the way of knowledge here, as well the obscurity of the matter as the shortness of human life."³

9. SOCRATES (born 469 B.C.).

Like the Sophists, Socrates started from man, the subject of consciousness; but he distinguished himself from them by seeking, not subjective opinions (δόξαι), but objective truths (τι εὖσεβές, τι ἀσεβές, τι καλόν, τι αἰσχρόν).⁴ The Sophists either denied or threw doubts upon the existence

¹ Cic. Acad. iv. 37, 118; Plut. ap. Euseb. Præp. Evang. i. 8, 4; Sext. Emped. Hypot. i. 225.

² Fragments of Xenophanes and of Parmenides in Karsten, Phil. Gr. Reliquiæ, vols. ii. and iii.

³ Diog. Laert. ix. 52.

⁴ Xenoph. Mem. I. i. 16.

of God; Socrates taught that God was the supreme and perfect reason, who, though invisible to the eye of man, is everywhere present (τὸ θεῖον πανταχοῦ πάρεστι), and that human reason must apprehend Him in His works.¹ His doctrine was no pantheism. "All the divinities," he said, "lavish on us goods, without making themselves visible. But the supreme God—He who directs and sustains the universe—He in whom are united all good things and all beauty—He who, for our use maintains it entire in a vigour and youth ever new, who forces it to obey His orders faster than thought, and without ever varying—this God is visibly occupied in great matters, but we do not see Him govern."

10. PLATO (born 429 B.C.).

This remarkable man carried out and perfected the theories of Socrates. His philosophy is also a religion founded on reason and moral law. He detached the idea of God from every trace of pantheism. In his eyes, God was incorporeal and incomprehensible, the primordial source of all existences, the maker and sustainer of the universe, the author of all good, the type of perfection and beauty. Ideas are the objects of God's thought. They are not, as with the Eleatic school, abstract being, but realities in a world of their own, of another sphere, transcending space. The visible world (κόσμος ὁρατός, τὰ αἰσθητά) bears the impress of the ideal world (μυμήματα, εἰκόνες, εἰδωλα, ὁμοιώματα). The Demiurge made the universe out of pre-existing material, according to the ideas of good projected upon matter, which, participating in the ideas, rose from a condition of mere ὕλη into that of a κόσμος ὁρατός. The

¹ Xenoph. Mem. i. 4; Symp. 6, 7.

² Ibid. iv. 8.

idea of an objective world in God is the cause (*αἰτία*) of the form of the finite and visible. Thus the God of Plato was not a creator, but an intelligent artificer.¹

11. ARISTOTLE (born 385 B.C).

The profound and powerful spirit of this universal doctor of antiquity sounded the defects of the Platonic philosophy and sought to remedy them. Aristotle conceived the relation of God to the world differently from Plato, not as a greater artificer, but as a final cause. Plato had taught a dualism of the ideal and the real. To this Aristotle opposed his conception of the universe. He denied the distinct existence of matter (*ὑλη*) from form (*εἶδος*). Form with him was οὐσία, the essence of things (*τὸ τί ἦν εἶναί*),² not impressed on them from without, but immanent in them (*τὸ ἐνόν*). Consequently, the system of Aristotle was directly opposed to that of Plato in this particular: Plato held that the essence of things consisted in the idea impressed on them from without; Aristotle held that the essence of things lay in the things themselves. The ἐξ οὗ of things, the ὑλη of Plato, was for him the δύναμις; that is to say, the virtuality, the power destined to realize itself by its internal development (*ἐνέργεια*).³ God, he taught, was absolute thought preceding the empirical world, the motive force of the world (*πρῶτον κινούν*),⁴ and the absolute end of all things (*τὸ οὗ ἕνεκα*).⁵ The absolute idea, conceived as a personal spirit, (*νοῦς, οὐσία κεχωρισμένη τῶν αἰσθητῶν*)⁶ is called νόησις νοήσεως;⁷ that is, the thought that thinks itself (*αὐτὸν νοεῖ*),⁸ the absolute subject-object, in which thinking

¹ Plato, *Timæus*, Phædrus.

² Ibid. viii. 8.

³ De Cælo, ii. 12.

⁴ Ibid. xi. 9.

² *Metaph.* I. 3.

⁴ Ibid. xi. 8.

⁶ *Met.* xi. 7.

⁸ Ibid. xi. 9.

and the thought are identical (τὸ αὐτό ἐστὶ τὸ νοοῦν καὶ τὸ νοοῦμενον). This being, the supreme cause, by all dreamt of but by none hitherto rightly known, is God.¹ He has not made or formed the world, which is from all eternity, but He is nevertheless the τέλος of the world, the object of its efforts and aspirations.²

There is, accordingly, an essential difference between Plato's God and the God of the Stagyrte. Plato's God is an intelligent master-builder, constructing a perfect world out of pre-existing perfect material; but the God of Aristotle acts not on the world. His world is thought; his field of energy, the ideal. He is one, eternal, perfect, and good, but He is so to Himself alone; and in this self-contemplation He is blessed. As the animal life is one of sensation, so the Divine life is one of intelligence; but that intelligence consists in the invariably even energy of its solitary self-contemplation, from which pleasure and delight are inseparable, because it is the activity of thought. God is not providence, as Plato taught; for if God were to know of the wrong and imperfection of the world, the knowledge of evil would disturb His bliss.³

12. EPICURÆAN SCHOOL.

Aristotle had taken, as the starting-point of his philosophy, the observation of nature, from which he deduced law. Epicurus (342-270 B.C.) rejected all *à priori* reasoning. He borrowed from the Atomic school the outlines of his system. Without venturing to deny the existence of the gods, lest he should draw upon himself public animadversion, he eviscerated them of every quality which could

¹ De Gen. et Corr. ii. 9.

² De Cœlo ii. 10-12.

³ Manuel de la Philosophie, p. 34 *seq*; Döllinger: Jew and Gentile, i. 835; Ritter: Hist. de la Philosophie, vol. iii.

make them divine.¹ The universe he regarded as an aggregate of atoms fortuitously assembled; but, whereas the old Atomists had supposed that these primary particles had fallen perpendicularly, Epicurus considered that they had been in a whirl of agitation, like snow-flakes in a storm.² Of order, providence, morality, Epicurus and his followers knew nothing. The world came by chance, by chance was upheld, and its fate depended on chance. Sensualism was the measure of all: "Judicia rerum in sensibus ponit."³ The pleasure of the soul is in sensual enjoyment, and pleasure is the object of life. "I should not know," Epicurus said, "how to represent to myself the idea of good, were I to suppress the enjoyment of eating and drinking, of music and beautiful forms, and the pleasures of love."⁴ "The belly is the place where centres all philosophy that is conformable to nature."⁵

13. THE STOICS.

Immediately opposed to the school of Epicurus was that of the Portico, founded by Zeno of Cittium (340-260 B.C.). The Stoics, uniting the cosmology of Heraclitus to the moral system of Antisthenes, formed out of this combination an ethic pantheism. The divinity, which in the scheme of Aristotle was the *πρῶτον εἶδος* and *πρῶτον κινεῖν*, became in the theory of the Stoic exclusively immanent, and nature was identified with God (*mundus Deus est*).⁶ The world, with an universal effusion of its spirit, was God; that is, God is the great principle of nature, containing and preserving the chain of all beings.⁷ The Stoics, accordingly,

¹ Cic. de Nat. Deor. i. 21, 27, 29, 43.

² Cic. de Fin. i. 6.

⁴ Diog. Laert. x. 6; Athen. vii. 5.

⁶ Cic. de Nat. Deor. ii. 11.

³ Ibid. i. 7.

⁵ Athen. xii. 12.

⁷ Ibid. i. 15.

deified every visible object. "Chrysippus," says Cicero, "deifies fire and those elements which naturally proceed from what I before called the ethereal spirit—water, earth, and air. He attributes divinity to the sun, moon, stars, and universal space, the grand container of all things, and to those men likewise who have obtained immortality."¹ The world is the body of God. The order and wisdom manifest in the universe are evidences of the presence of God in it. The universe is perfect (τέλειον σῶμα).² Evil is absorbed in the harmony of the whole (ἡ κακία οὐκ ἀχρήστως γίνεται πρὸς τὰ ὅλα).³ Everything, good and evil, life and death, growth and decay, are parts of the law of general existence, of the life of the world,—God, of whom the present phase of cosmic being is but a transitory phase.⁴

14. THE NEW SCEPTICS.

The dogmatism of the Stoics and of the Epicureans provoked the appearance of another school, of which Pyrrho of Elis (325 B.C.) may be regarded as the founder. This school maintained the incompetence of man to arrive at any conclusion upon the nature of the gods and the origin of the world. Man, they held, could not attain objective truth from sensible observation, or from intellectual analysis. Sensible impressions are merely the perceptions of sense, and do not prove substantial existence. To be certain that an object really answered to its appearance, it would be necessary for the subject to detach itself from its subjective impressions and to compare the objects with their subjective representations, and then it would be qualified to

¹ Cic. de Nat. Deor. i. 15.

² Diog. Laert. vii. 147.

³ Chrysip. ap. Plut. de Stoic. Repug. 44.

⁴ Ravaisson: Mémoire sur le Stoicisme. Zeller: Die Philosophie d. Griechen, vol. i.

pronounce upon their reality.¹ Reason, also, is incapable of leading to truth. Every demonstration rests on an undemonstrated thesis, and the greatest uncertainty reigns in philosophy on the essence of that reason which is taken as the criterion of the truth. It is not merely the subject which this positivism refuses to consider as a basis of truth, but also the object, which, by its nature, is withdrawn from a sphere of absolute certainty. For the essence of things reveals itself solely in the totality of their observable qualities, and these qualities interpose themselves between us and the essence of being, so that it is impossible for man to penetrate beyond the veil of phenomena. Moreover, the logical distinction between cause and effect is a pure illusion. No cause can produce anything but what is in it. Cause and effect are two names of the same thing in different stages of progress.

This reasoning exerted great influence on the idea of God. If cause and effect are indistinguishable and inseparable, the world and God are the same. God is not the cause of the world, and the world is not an effect. The sceptics thus annihilated the conception of God.²

15. THE NEOPLATONISTS.

Greek philosophy died under the influence of scepticism. Speculation, after having traversed the different phases of naturalism, idealism, sensualism, dualism, and pantheism, —after having occupied itself alternately in questioning the universe as object, and man as subject, of all knowledge,—gave up the problem in despair; and, wearied of thinking, men's minds lapsed into systematic doubt, or into an ascetic mysticism.

¹ Sext. Emp. adv. Math. vii. 287, 295, *et seq.*

² Scholten : Manuel de Philos. pp. 47, 48.

The Neoplatonic school of Alexandria (Ammonius Saccas, 200; Plotinus, 205-270; Porphyry, 233-304; Iamblicus, 300; Proclus, 412-485) substituted a fantastic doctrine of emanations for observation and experience. The abstract All, without attribute, or the Pleroma (τὸ πρῶτον, τὸ ἀπλούν, τὸ εἶν, τὸ ὄν, τὸ ἐπέκεινα πάντων, τὸ ἄπειρον),¹ is the point of departure for a series of emanations which compose the ideal world, then the soul of the world, and lastly the material world, which is to some extent overflowing with it (οὖν ὑπερεβρύη καὶ τὸ ὑπερπληρές);² this materializing of emanations from the Pleroma is a species of fall. Human souls originally belonging to the κόσμος νοητός sank into matter, and forgot their divine origin, which can only be recovered by a conquest of the spirit over matter by means of asceticism and contemplation.³ Greek philosophy ended sadly, in the renunciation of observation and thought. A new leaven was needed to renovate the human mind.⁴

II. INDIAN PHILOSOPHY.

1. BRAHMANISM.

After the nature-worship of the Vaidic age, and the anthropomorphism immediately following it, ensued a period of intellectual movement, and a theodicy was constructed, based on intelligent principles, and elaborated by speculative philosophy, in which the same hypotheses which emerge and break down in Greek philosophy co-exist without their antagonism being perceived. In Hindúism of

¹ Plotin. Enn. vi. 9.

² Ibid. v. 2.

³ Porph. de Abstin. I. iii.

⁴ Scholten: Manuel, p. 50. Schwegler: Hist. Philosoph. Tr. p. 141; Stirling, 1868. Tennemann: Man. Philos. p. 177, ed. Bohn.

this period there is a tendency towards unity eminently apparent. Every species of existence was regarded as a constituent part of the Deity, and the special character of an object was held to depend on its proximity to God. "In the creed of Brahmanism, as methodized by orthodox philosophy, God alone is truly said to be: all other forms of life are, as to their material properties, but empty and illusive; while, as to their spiritual properties, they are but transient scintillations of His glory. Alone, supreme, and unapproachable, a feeling of dissatisfaction with Himself had crossed the mind of the Great Solitary. He longed for offspring, and at length determined to resolve the primitive simplicity of His essence, and transform Himself into a world which might contrast with His eternal quietude. From this desire of God has sprung whatever is, or is to be: the earth, the sky, the rock, the flower, the forest, the innumerable tribes of gods and men, of beasts and demons; these, so far as they possess a true existence, are all substantial with Divinity. The basis underlying all the forms which they assume is the ineffable, the uncreated."¹

The pure metaphysical conception of God was called *Brahm*, an abstraction, self-centred, self-absorbed, the cause and the end of all; the impulse of His will caused beings and matter to spring into existence; there was no labour of creation, no dualism of conflicting essences, spirit and matter, but a simple objecting of the subject.² This looks like the doctrine of evolution of nature; but from another point the hypothesis is that of a negation of the positive existence of the visible world. The forms of matter are held to be illusive. The semblance of reality

¹ Hardwick: *Christ and other Masters*, i. 195.

² Müller: *Glauben u. Wissen der alten Hindus*, p. 90 *et seq.*; Mainz, 1822.

possessed by them is due to Máya, the personification of God's fruitless longing for some being other than His own. Máya, which originally signified the longing of the Deity, afterwards became the synonym for delusion and unreality; and it was taught that by means of Máya a phantom world of dream-like imagery rose before the eye of the Great One, and that this semblance of reality is the phenomenal universe in which we live. But Hindú philosophic theodoxy had a tendency towards dualism. Divine spirit on one side, and the world soul and man's soul on the other, were regarded in the light of the undefined and the defined: the latter as taken out of the former, being a part of His substance and of His nature, but bounded. This limitation is a defect, and consequently a fall, and physical nature, inasmuch as it is not without term, is opposed to the nature of God. The world, and all that is in the world, passes through three stages, growth, perfection, and decay; and the last of these, deified as Siva, becomes the opposite pole to the creative force of Brahmá.

2. SĀṆKHYA PHILOSOPHY.

The founder of this philosophy was Kapila, and he called it Sāṅkhya, because he deemed it a result of pure reason. It does not, like some other systems, strive to discriminate between existence and non-existence, but seeks the reason why existences are as they are. In this creed, the plastic origin of all material things is the absolute, the indestructible, the eternal. This is the spring of life, a source from which material essences and their modifications emanate in constant development—not rational and benevolent, but a blind impulsive life, evolving intelligence as a property of material essence, like weight or dimension. Consequently, human

intelligence is a mere material property of man ; and Kapila declared, as the grand climax of his teaching, "Neither I am, nor is aught mine, nor is there any I."¹

3. BUDDHISM.

The Sāṅkhya philosophy prepared the way for Buddhism. In Brahmanism, God was all in all. The earth and all that is in it was of God. Man himself was a reflex of God, His microcosm. Kapila led a reaction against this pantheism. He dispensed with God as a necessary cause, and Sākya-muni dismissed Him altogether from his system. Sāṅkhyaism was aneutheistic, Buddhism atheistic. Kapila taught the existence of an active material essence, but Sākya-muni denied even that. A writing of authority among the Buddhists says: "Beings are not created by one God, or Lord, neither by one spirit, neither by matter. If there were indeed a single cause of all things, as God, or spirit, or matter, then, by the simple fact of the existence of this cause, must the world at once have been created in its entirety, since a cause cannot exist without producing its due effect. But all things may be seen to come into the world, according to a law of succession, some issuing from the parent womb, others from the germ. It must therefore be concluded that there is a series of causes, and that God is not the single cause."²

The Brahman had taught transmigration of souls. Beings had been held to pass through all forms of existence, from the lowest unorganized masses to the highest intelligence.

¹ Ballantyne: *Lecture on Sāṅkhya Philos.*; Mizrapore, 1850. Hardwick, i. 208. Ballantyne: *Christianity contrasted with Hindú Philosophy*; London, 1859.

² Yasomitra: quoted by Bournouf, *Introd. à l'Histoire du Bouddhism*, p. 572; Paris, 1844.

They rose to a probationary and determining state in humanity, and according to the issue of their trial enjoy blessedness or endure woe for ages, after which a new cycle of existences begins, and they with it revolve again through all the stages of being.¹ This terrible succession of age on age of elevation and degradation, from which there was no escape, weighed on the mind of the Hindú, and as an escape from it Sákya devised his scheme. This was to cut short the hopeless gyration of life, by holding out annihilation as a door of escape. Nirvána was the crown and supreme end of Buddhist doctrine. It was that which would deliver from fear and prove the safety and salvation of man. "In its ordinary acceptation, as an adjective, it (*nirvána*) signifies extinct, as a fire which is gone out; set, as a luminary which has gone down; defunct, as a saint who has passed away. Its etymology is from *vá*, to blow as wind; with the preposition *nir*, used in a negative sense, it means calm and unruffled. The notion which is attached to the word in the acceptation now under consideration is that of perfect apathy."² Thus the hope of the Buddhist is but a poor one; it is perhaps not so much the prospect of annihilation, as of the termination of all personal consciousness and the destruction of individuality.³

III. CHINESE PHILOSOPHY

1. CONFUCIANISM.

The primitive Chinese were probably spirit worshippers, in the vague manner of the Turanian tribes of Northern

¹ Westm. Rev., New Series, No. xx. p. 312.

² Colebrooke's Misc. Essays, i. 401.

³ Hardy: Manual of Buddhism. Saint-Hilaire: Du Bouddhisme. Koepfen: Die Religion des Buddha, &c.

Asia, and their perception of the powers in nature resulted in a similar vague deification of heaven and earth; but the ancient Chinese never developed their rudiments of religion into a systematic polytheism, and whatever currents of feeling may have existed in the primitive religion, they were arrested by the icy breath of Confucian philosophy. According to the teaching of this eminent man, underlying all nature is a principle of cohesion which he calls the *Tae-keih*, beyond which thought cannot reach. From this, the fundamental and absolute force of nature, undetermined, inconceivable, without intelligence, providence, or purpose, all beings animate and inanimate rise into existence, and then, fading, die back into their primal source, as bubbles float on a spring, welled up from unknown depths, and burst, and are no more. "The Absolute," says Tschuh-i, "is like a stem shooting upwards: it is parted into twigs, it puts forth leaves and flowers; forth it springs incessantly, until its fruit is fully ripe; and yet even then the power of reproduction never ceases to be latent in it. The vital juice is there; and so the Absolute still works, and works indefinitely. Nothing hinders or can hinder its activity, until the fruits have all been duly ripened, and activity gives place to rest."¹ The Chinese have no conception of God, or soul, or spirit, detached from what is material. Even their dead ancestors are supposed to require new clothes every now and then, and to be addicted to rice and chopsticks every whit as much as in life. All matter they hold to be bound together by an unity which has no reality apart from matter. The slightest disturbance in the order of the universe would dissolve the principle of cohesion, and it would be no more. So intimately has this idea

¹ Neumann: *Religions-Philosophie der Chinesen*, in *Zeitschrift für d. Histor. Theologie*, vii. 50; 1837.

penetrated into the language, that it is impossible to render the first verse of Genesis in the language of the country. The word *hoa*, which signifies to make, carries with it also the idea of spontaneity in emergence from a condition of not-being of the thing made; and *tsáo*, the word used in Morrison's translation, has the meaning of making out of already existing material.¹

2. CHINESE DUALISM.

In spite of the idea of unity which was present in the teaching of the early philosophers, Chinese speculation proceeded to develop a dualism of force and matter. The former was called *Le*, and the latter *Ke*. *Le* is immaterial, *ke* is subtilized matter. *Ke* is the medium through which *le* is manifested. *Ke* also, when analysed, is dual, for in it are *yin* and *yang*, conflicting forces, whose antagonism produces the phenomenal world. *Yin* and *yang* are termed the two *ke*, because they are both *ke*, as flesh and spirit are one man. "A transcendental union and coagulation takes place of the ultimate principle, the two essences, and the five elements. The positive essence becomes the masculine power, and the negative essence the feminine power—conceived in which character the former constitutes the heavenly mode or principle, the latter the earthly mode or principle: by a mutual influencing, the two produce all things in the visible, palpable world; and the double work of evolution and dissolution goes on without end."² Thus *yang* is the progressive force, *yin* the retrogressive principle. *Yang* is the impulse forwards, *yin* cuts progress short. *Yang* predominates in spring and summer,

¹ Neumann: Religions-Philosophie der Chinesen, in Zeitschrift für d. Histor. Theologie, vii. 30; 1837.

² Meadows: The Chinese and their Rebellions, p. 345; 1856.

and is the author of all movement and activity, *yin* is visible in autumn and winter, and is passive, decaying, or inert.¹

3. TAOISM.

This philosophy, founded by Lao-tse (B.C. 604), is but another form of the doctrine of the Absolute. Tao, or the Way, is that by which all things are, and are sustained. It is without beginning and end, eternal, infinite, impassible, and unintelligent. It has a spiritual essence, it is the law of order, and thus the pattern of moral virtue. Tao is in fact the system of Nature, the initial principle of life and harmony, but it is not God, it has no will, no intelligence. "You look for Tao, and you see it not; its name is I. You listen for it, and you hear it not; its name is Hi. You seek to touch it, and you feel it not; its name is Wei. These three are inscrutable, and inexpressible by the aid of language; . . . it is called a formless form, an imageless image. It is vague and undefinable."² And these three elements of the Way are pure abstractions; for *I* signifies absence of colour; *Hi*, absence of sound; *Wei*, absence of form.³

IV. CHRISTIANITY.

We have traced the fluctuations of heathen philosophy, and seen how one hypothesis after another has been taken up and set aside; and how that these hypotheses succeed one another with a regularity which implies that their succession is due to a governing law. This law is easily

¹ Hardwick : Christ and other Masters, ii. 54 ; 1863.

² Tao-te-King, ed. Julien.

³ Pauthier : l'Origine de la Doctrine du Tao ; Paris, 1831. Lao-tsze : Trübner, London, 1869.

distinguishable. Not one of them fully and satisfactorily explains the problem of the universe. The hypothesis which is in vogue is felt to be deficient, and the next is assumed in the hopes that it will prove more satisfactory, and when it in turn disappoints expectations it is shelved, and another theory becomes dominant in turn; thus philosophic theosophy moves in a cycle in which materialism, pantheism, idealism, dualism, arbitrary theism, and positivism are the successive stages. The lines of demarcation are not always distinctly emphasized between the schools of speculation, but under these heads they must be ranked, though they may not acknowledge the classification. Indeed, it is impossible to conceive any hypothesis which is not either an assumption of the accidental origin of the compound world, or of the universe being a living nature, or of a dualism of force and matter, or is a denial of the positive existence of the physical world, or an assumption of a Creator. As we shall presently observe, modern philosophy follows the old rotation.

Christianity advances a hypothesis which has at least the merit of conciliating apparently discrepant schools. It asserts, with theism, that the world is made by God; with pantheism, it allows that God underlies nature; it touches dualism in its doctrine of the Fall; and it can even admit, with the materialist, that possibly matter is eternal. But, in opposition to these schools, it teaches that matter, if eternal, is only so as the eternal manifestation of an eternal God; that the dualism is not one of coequal powers, but that the second power is a distortion of an emanation from the One source of power, the fraction of a ray from Him in the medium of the phenomenal universe; that God is a free agent, but that at the same time He is necessitated—necessitated not by a power without, but by His own nature.

Christianity proposes to gather all the hypotheses of the philosophers into one lens, and produce from them one beam of dazzling truth. It does not pronounce any school to be radically false, but it declares that each views only one phase of a truth which it is beyond the mind of man to grasp in all its relations. But of the relation of Christianity to the philosophies of ancient and modern times we shall speak elsewhere.

We proceed now to a necessarily brief sketch of European philosophy of modern times.

V. MODERN PHILOSOPHY.

1. DESCARTES (1596—1650).

This great thinker, starting from the grand truth *cogito, ergo sum*, affirmed only the conscient self as the basis on which to rear a philosophy. What is the value of representations of which the I-myself takes cognizance? Are they effects produced by external facts, or are they mental pictures evolved by the imagination? Descartes answers this problem thus. The idea of an infinite and perfect being is in man. He cannot obtain this idea from himself, for he is finite; nor from any object presented to his senses. This idea is therefore innate. Hence the idea of God can only be explained on the supposition that there is a real existence such as that conceived by man, who has impressed this conception on man. From the existence of the I-myself one can therefore infer the existence of God. The existence of God being proved, it follows that God is perfect, and perfectly true, therefore truth or reality is stamped by Him on all He has made, therefore the perceptions of man are objectively real.

Descartes then seeks to determine the substance of God.

reasoning from the substance of the self. The I-myself can conceive itself independent of matter, but it cannot conceive itself independent of thought; the essence of man is therefore thought: he is a thinking being, consequently spiritual, as such, in his essence, immaterial, incorporeal, and, inasmuch as essence is indivisible, he is immortal. In the world, Descartes saw two distinct substances, spiritual substance and corporeal substance. The essential attribute of spirit is thought, that of matter is extension. God, he taught, consisted of pure spiritual substance. Free-will is a power of the spirit: it therefore is an attribute of God. The foundation of His activity is not to be sought in the perfection of His nature, but in the freedom of His will. God is bound by no law, ruled by no necessity; therefore the creation of the world, and its conservation, are due to His will alone.¹

2. MALEBRANCHE (1638—1715).

This man's aim seems to have been to reconcile the Cartesian philosophy with Christianity; he perceived the latent dualism in the system of his master, and laboured to reduce it to an unity of being, but in so doing he nearly fell into a denial of the positive existence of the objects which meet the senses.²

3. SPINOZA (1632—1677).

The unity of God and the world, of spirit and matter, of soul and body, which Malebranche had conceived in a purely ideal manner, becomes with Spinoza truth and reality. Starting from the idea of substance, as "that

¹ Œuvres Morales et Philos. de Descartes; Paris, 1855.

² Œuvres, ed. J. Simon; Paris, 1842.

which to exist has need of nothing else," he shows that the Cartesian notion of thought and extension opposed to each other is contrary to the true definition of substance.¹ If there exist outside of God any other substance, then it has no need of God that it may exist, and it is consequently independent. If, on the contrary, all that one considers as outside of God is dependent on Him, one must deny that there is any substance outside of Him; God, therefore, is the only substance.² His essence is not merely infinite thought, as Descartes supposed, but matter (*res extensa*), which had been placed apart from Him by that philosopher, is actually an attribute of God, just as thought is His attribute. Thus thought and extension, spirit and matter, are two fundamental attributes, two modes by which the unique substance reveals itself to us.³ The distinction between God and the world is only a logical distinction; that is, these terms are different names of the same essence. The universe, inasmuch as its totality is the foundation of all particular existence, *natura naturans*, is God. On the other hand, the assemblage of accidents by which the fundamental essence presents itself to our observation, *natura naturata*, is properly called the world.

In the first part of his *Ethics* he demonstrates the nature of God; (1) that He necessarily exists; (2) is One; (3) exists and acts from the sole necessity of His nature; (4) is the free Cause of all things, and that all things are in God, and so dependent on Him, that without Him they are neither able to exist nor to be conceived; (5) lastly, that all things have been predetermined by God, not indeed by free-will, or absolute well-pleasing, but by the absolute nature or absolute power of God. In his 21st Epistle, written to

¹ Spinoz. Op. ed. Bruder, *Ethica* i. Def. 3; Lips. 1841.

² P. i. prop. 14.

³ P. i. prop. 14, coroll. 2; p. ii. prop. 1, 2

Oldenburg, he says, "I hold that God is the immanent cause of all things, as they say, not the transient. All things, I say, are in God, and I affirm with Paul that they are moved in God, and indeed also with all the ancient philosophers, though in a different manner." In the 23rd Epistle he writes, "In no sense do I subject God to fate, but conceive that all things follow from the nature of God by inevitable necessity, just as all conceive it to follow from the nature of God Himself that He understands Himself. Hence this inevitable necessity of things neither takes away divine laws nor human. For the same moral codes, whether they receive the form of law or equity from God Himself or not, are nevertheless divine and salutary; and the good which follows from Virtue and Divine law will not be more or less to be desired whether we receive it from God as a judge, or whether it flow from the necessity of Divine nature, as neither on the other hand are evils less to be feared which follow corrupt practices and passions because they follow them necessarily, and lastly, we are led by hope and fear, whether we do those things which we do necessarily or contingently."

Spinoza's system resulted in three great consequences: 1. The denial of the creation of matter;¹ 2. The denial of the divine personality;² 3. The negation of free-will.³

4. LEIBNITZ (1648-1716).

The theodocy of Spinoza had started from a substance, one, infinite, the base of the world, impersonal and undetermined. Leibnitz opposed to this the hypothesis of a living primal force. Matter, which Anaxagoras and Plato among the ancients, and Descartes and Spinoza among the

¹ Cogit. Metaph. c. x. ² Ibid. p. ii. Epist. l., lx. Eth. i. prop. 17, Schol.

³ Eth. p. i. 26-36; ii. 48.

moderns, had regarded as inert, became in the system of Leibnitz the sensible revelation of motion, life, and force. Spirit he supposed to be, not thought only, but a virtuality, an essence endowed with original ideas which are not innate in man under an adequate form, but exist *virtualiter*, *potentialiter*. Spinoza deduced all things from the sole substance, and was consequently obliged to sacrifice individualities to the unique general Being. Leibnitz, on the contrary, considered all things as the reunion of an infinite number of essences or independent forces, active, living, distinct, indivisible, imperishable, without form or extension, to which he gave the name of *monads*, that they might not be confounded with the atoms of Democritus and Epicurus. Each of these monads differs from the other, not in kind, but in degree. Each is a little complete being in itself, and reflects, as in a mirror, the entire universe, or God. The world is an assemblage of these monads. Each monad, by nature of the independent inherent force in it, is without natural relationship to the other monads. Their bond of union is a pre-established harmony, as Leibnitz called it, in virtue of which, without destroying the independence of these primitive forces, he considered them to be so constituted that their mutual development in no way clashed, but, on the contrary, worked towards a harmonious end. This pre-established harmony is due to God, the author of these living monads.¹

5. HOBBS (1588-1679).

In contrast to the spiritualist school which prevailed abroad, in England a school of sensational philosophy arose, which necessarily led to scepticism. Thomas Hobbes did

¹ Leibnitz: Opera Philos. ed. Erdmann, 1840.

not deny the existence of God, but by posing all knowledge in the evidence of the senses, he prepared the way for a negation of all that is suprasensible. According to him, the soul is simply matter that thinks, and the universe is unintelligent matter, harmonized and combined by physical necessities.¹

6. LOCKE (1632—1703).

The empiric system inaugurated by Bacon and developed by Hobbes conducted Locke to the experimental study of the faculty of knowing, and to a theory of understanding based on this study. Locke, like Hobbes, deduced understanding from impressions received through the senses; but, contrary to the latter, he recognized in man a faculty of reflection. The idea of God, not being obtainable by experience, Locke deduces from an empirical observation of the universe, to which reflection applies the law of causality. But the idea of God must be distinguished from the reality of God. Man obtains his notion of God, not from an instinct, as was conjectured by Descartes, but by observation and reflection. God is, as the source of law and order.²

7. HUME (1711—1776).

The doctrine of Locke, that rational ideas were formed by reflection on sensations, was carried out by Hume, who showed that one could not attribute any objective certainty to ideas received by this means. He concluded that we have no idea of substance, corporeal or spiritual; no idea of force, nor of cause, and except as something antecedent, and constantly linked with what we call its effect; and, in

¹ Hobbes: *Opera Omnia*; London, 1750.

² Locke: *Philosophical Works*, ed. Bohn.

a word, that we have no idea of anything but our own sensations, and the conscious operations of our minds. There exists, therefore, no certain knowledge on any matter of experience. The deeply penetrating scepticism of Hume was directed against the immortality of the soul, against the reality of miracles, the providence and the existence of God.¹

8. KANT (1724—1804).

According to this great reasoner, the general principle of pure reason is this: the conditional being granted, along with it is granted the entire series of conditioned, and consequently the unconditioned itself. This principle has a threefold application—to thought, to sensible objects, and to things in general. Whence arise three ideas: the psychological idea, or that of the soul; the cosmological idea, or that of the universe; and the theological idea, or that of God. None of these ideas are experimentally acquired; they exist as pure intuitions, solely for the reason; they can neither be demonstrated nor realized. They cannot be demonstrated, since they are that which is most general, and is the basis of all demonstration. They cannot be realized, since they represent that which is beyond all possible experience. Their value is purely subjective. The science of these ideas Kant calls transcendental dialectics. He proceeds to demolish metaphysical argument. Metaphysics concludes, from the abstract conception of our thinking being, that it is absolutely one. What the I-myself is, is beyond our observation, and the logical fault committed by those reasoning on it is that they assume a property of a substance to be an independent substance. Touching the world, he observes the incapacity

¹ Hume: *Philosophical Works*; Edinb. 1837.

of reason to prove its objective reality. The same with regard to God. All the arguments advanced by metaphysicians to prove the existence of God, crumble into dust beneath his touch.

Having demolished metaphysical argument, Kant proceeds to build up a system upon morality. He first proves that the concept of duty has an objective character, which is not possessed by any of the concepts of speculative reason. He then maintains that this concept of duty communicates immediately its objectivity to a second concept, that of liberty, which is so closely bound up with the first, that they form together an inseparable whole. Duty and liberty become the pivots of man's conscious being; and his life is one of conflict between the impulse of free will to assert its liberty and the impulse of conscience to insist on duty as a curb. This conflict must cease; there must be some moral equilibrium between duty and liberty. Therefore there is a future life and a God. Practical reason does not demonstrate, but demands, the existence of both. The moral concept thus communicates its objective virtue to the religious concepts. Having affirmed the existence of God, Kant proceeds to define His nature. He shows that He must be intelligent, omniscient, omnipotent, eternal. Thus by his "Critique of Practical Reason," Kant restored religion and morality, the fabric of which he seemed to have ruined by his "Critique of Speculative Reason."¹

¹ Kant: Complete Works, ed. Rosenkrantz and Schubert; Leipsic, 1838-40. Morell: Historical and Critical View, &c.; London, 1848. Saintes: Vie et Philosophie de Kant; Paris, 1844. Beidermann: Die Philosophie von Kant bis auf unsere Zeit, 1842. Erdmann: Die Entwicklung d. deut. Specul. seit Kant, 1848. Saisset: Pantheism; London, 1863.

9. FICHTE (1762—1814).

Above the individual *I*, which is the basis of Fichte's logical system, he places the pure and general *I*, acting and revealing itself in the human thought, and dominating its activity, the governing principle of the moral world. But above and outside of the moral world there is no personality. That principle is the highest that can be conceived. "This active and living order is God Himself; we need no other God, and indeed we can conceive no other." The idea of a personal God, of a being who exists as a person beside other persons, is, he argues, incompatible with His infinity; and those who attribute to God a conscious personality, in fact reflect their own personality upon Him. Having been accused of atheism, Fichte attempted to rectify his logic, and without restoring to the Deity that personality of which he had divested Him, he explained that the great absolute *I* thought the world, and so objected Himself into a personality conceivable by man. The universe is then the Non-Ego produced by the Ego, and one with it. In other words, God is the absolute subject-object, the Eternal Unity, infinite thought which embraces eternally the universe.¹

10. HEGEL (1770—1831).

In the preceding chapter an outline has been given of the theosophy of this subtle reasoner, to which only a few words need be added here.

According to Hegel, the Absolute has three moments; the first is pure immaterial thought; the second is the heterization of immaterial thought, the disruption of thought

¹ Fichte: *Sur le Fondement de notre Foi*; 1798. *Sämmtliche Werke*: Berlin, 1845. Fischhaber: *Ueber das Princip. d. Fichteschen Systems*; Carlsruhe, 1801.

into the infinite atomism of time and space, that is to say into Nature; the third is the return out of heterousia into ousia, the resolution of the heterization of nature, and in this way it becomes at last actual, self-cognizant thought.¹

This cursory review of the speculations of the great minds of antiquity and modern times, on the subject of the relation existing between God and the world, has been necessary, as synoptic exhibition of thought oscillating between theism and pantheism, or standing still in despair of a solution and proclaiming materialism.

The irresistible tendency towards one or other view, the existence of God outside of and apart from matter, or His immanence in matter, show that the truth must be sought, not on one side or the other exclusively, but in one point which will conciliate the two. May not theism and pantheism be two aspects of the same truth? And may not one without the other be but half a truth? If it were not so, the argument on each side would not be so assailable. Theism pierces the joints of pantheistic argument, expecting to slay it, and pantheism strikes blows at theism meant to be deadly, but without ever reaching its vital centre. Possibly each is true in its affirmations, and each is false in its negations.

¹ Hegel's *Werke*: Berlin, 1834-45. Stirling: *The Secret of Hegel*; and Stirling's translation of Schwegeler's *Handbook of the History of Philosophy*; 1868.

CHAPTER XVI

THE IDEA OF EVIL

The idea of evil a generalization from the perception of pain—personification of evil—The first idea of evil the idea of God—The second stage is the belief in the capriciousness of the gods—The third stage is dualism—The fourth stage is Satanism—The fifth stage the denial of the absolute existence of evil—Objections to this theory.

THE idea of evil is a generalization from the perception of pain.

If frost did not nip, and fire blister the skin, man would have no idea of the harmful; and the harmful is the evil.¹

Infant humanity behaved towards what hurt it, after the manner of children. The boy who has been stung by a nettle, takes a stick and beats down the weed. The girl who has torn her clothes in scrambling over a hedge, lays the blame on the brambles. The child, far from seeing that the fault lies in its own actions, attributes to the object that has caused the pain malignant motives and a hostile will. This habit survives in the adult, who gives character to the ship and temper to the sun and wind.

¹ It is unavoidable, in treating of the origin of the idea of evil, not to go over part of the ground already trodden in the consideration of the origin of the idea of God, and of morality.

When pain is felt without any tangible object to which to attribute a motive and a will to hurt, as in disease, some object is feigned, and given imaginary being. Plague, and famine, and war, are conditions of suffering; but instead of man looking to his own neglect of sanitary precaution as the cause of plague, to his own bad husbandry as the reason why his barns are empty, to his own bad government as the generator of war, he supposes plague, famine, and war to be active genii of evil. David speaks of the "pestilence that walketh in darkness," and Horace of "Pallid death with equal foot tapping at the door of the pauper's hovel and the prince's hall." What to David and Horace is mere *prosopopeia*, to the savage is not metaphor at all, but is a reality. He regards death, pestilence, and famine as vengeful divinities whose wrath must be deprecated.

Man must find a reason which will account for every phenomenon, good or evil. The Huron Indian, when attacked by small-pox, supposed that it was produced by the breath of a wicked demon, who prowled at night about his wigwam.¹ The Australian savage, when gorged with mutton and suffering from nightmare, attributes his pain to a fiend who is pestering him for a light, and he flings a firebrand into the night to relieve himself of his distress.² When the North American Indians are afflicted with drought, they seek a cause, and however absurd that cause may be, it satisfies them because it does account for their discomfort. "The crops were withering under a severe drought," says a historian of Canadian missions; "the pitiless sky was cloudless. There was thunder in the east, and thunder in the west; but over Ithonatiria all was

¹ Le Mercier: *Rélation des Hurons*, p. 134; 1637.

² Sir G. Grey: *Journals*, vol. ii. p. 339; 1841.

serene. A renowned rainmaker, seeing his reputation tottering under his repeated failures, bethought him of accusing the Jesuits, and gave out that the red colour of the cross which stood before their house scared the bird of thunder, and caused him to fly another way."¹

Man in his lowest term has no other conception of God than one of power, and power exercised for his bane. At first he took cognizance only of that which injured him. Everything that is agreeable and useful he accepted tacitly, as a matter of course; but his attention was riveted by antagonistic forces. The earth is the grave of his race; the sea opens its mouth to suck him in, and then to spew him forth a mangled corpse. Heaven retreats behind a veil of blackness, that it may draw the bow and shoot lightning shafts at murderable men; the beasts are his natural enemies; the jackal robs his hoards of blubber, the bear hugs the wind out of his body, the wolf steeps its muzzle in his children's blood, and the hyæna crunches the bones of his parents. He tills a little patch of field, and the river overleaps its banks and sweeps his grain away. He builds a hovel of birch-bark, and the wind, with an exultant howl, rips it from the soil and scatters it like dead leaves over the tundra. He strives with palsied fingers to light a fire, but the rain has soaked the sticks, and they cannot be made to ignite, so he crouches in the darkness and cold with chattering teeth, hating earth and heaven and the life he lives.

A hostile power is in arms against him, armed with sun-beam, thunderbolt, flood, and gale. His life is a contest with this power that is about his path and about his bed, thwarting him, wounding him, blighting his happiness, smiting him with disease, and finally dragging him under-

¹ Parkman; *Jesuits in Canada*, p. 68; 1868.

ground to rottenness. He feels that he has no weapons to oppose to this mighty power. He may send an arrow on high, like the Chinese emperor, and he is smitten into the ground with a meteoric bolt. He may throw chains over the deep, like Xerxes, but he cannot bind the thundering waves. He may build a tower against the flood, and like Babel in the plains of Shinar, it will melt away as wax before the dropping rains. He has but one course open to him : it is to fling away his weapons and lift up his bare hands to heaven, and bow his naked knee, and by prayer and sacrifice pacify that awful potency which weighs him down. Thus every infant people has risen like an infant plant, with expanded palms, as seed leaves, beseechingly.

"The idea of the devil," observes Jacob Grimm, "is foreign to all primitive religions," for this reason, that in all primitive religions the idea of God is the idea of a devil. New Englanders supposed Hobbamock to be the arch-fiend of the Indians, because the myths told of him represented him as malevolent ; but, in fact, he was their Supreme Oki, or God.¹ Juripari, worshipped by certain tribes of the pampas of Buenos Ayres, and said to be their wicked spirit, is in fact the only name in their language for a spiritual existence.

From this it follows that the first stage in the conception of a devil is the attribution of evil to God. But from this stage of belief man strides to a second. He begins to observe that those influences which at one time are hostile to him, at another are beneficent ; that the power which at one time blighted his interests, at another time favours them. Night, whilst filling his mind with terror, is at the same time a soother after toil. The sun, which at one time burns up his herbage, in spring brings it forward. The

¹ Brinton : *Myths of the New World*, p. 60 : 1868.

rain that drenches his limbs and fills his bones with ague, fertilizes the soil. The fire that consumes his hut is also his cheerful companion at night, and his comfort in winter. We see evidence of this double nature in the gods of the Veda. Agni (fire) is invoked as the protector of mortals, and his wrath is deprecated as that of the cannibal god, the great devastator, the cruel one. Yama, the prince of death, has also two sides to his character—the one merciful, the other savage. Aryaman is at one time a good, at another an evil genius. Tvashtri and Varuna have likewise their contrasting aspects. Man has not yet reached the idea of antagonisms in nature, and conflict with each other of opposing forces. He merely observes the mutable temper of the natural powers. He therefore supposes them to be capricious and whimsical. This does not surprise him at first, for his gods are but reflections of himself on a large scale, and therefore he sees without a shock to his moral sense, that they are as wavering in purpose, as petty in their feelings, as exacting and unjust, as he is himself. The Homeric deities have their personal favourites among mortals, and differ in their political views. The gods are not altogether bad, nor wholly good. The Quiche Tohil is the giver of fire to man, the American Prometheus, but he is also the institutor of human sacrifice. Odin's board groans with pork and mead, but to feast with him man must die in battle. The gods are man's friends or foes, according as he treats them. They have to be flattered, and humoured, and bribed to keep them well disposed.

A third step is made when dualism is reached. A multitude of wilful and perverse deities without settled principles, cannot satisfy man's moral requirements when he begins to think deeply. The philosophers stood forth

in the face of Greek polytheistic mythology, and boldly denounced its irrationality. Their conception of morality transcended Olympus. "If the gods do evil," said Euripides, "then are they no gods."¹ "Have they not made illicit connexions with each other? Have they not disgraced their sires by chaining them, that they themselves may have the mastery? Nevertheless they dwell in Olympus, and endure the disgrace of having sinned!" says Theseus; to whom Herakles replies, "I deem that the gods love not illicit connexions, nor have I ever supposed it, nor shall I ever be persuaded that they put chains on each other's hands. These are the miserable tales of poets."²

The dualistic theory is an escape from the difficulty into which reasoning men were plunged by the popular traditions of polytheism. The ideas of a metaphysical and a moral God precluded the idea of versatility, for where there is change there is imperfection, and the admission of imperfection as characterising a god is a negation of his divinity.

In external nature spirit and matter, growth and decay, life and death appear to be in perpetual conflict. Men supposed that light and darkness, summer and winter, heat and cold, good and evil, prosperity and adversity, health and disease, were attributable to opposing principles.

All polytheisms show a natural tendency to break up into antagonistic camps, and this approach to dualism is proportionate to the civilization of the polytheists. There are no wars in heaven in the mythology of savages, but when intelligent speculation invades religion, the divinities at once fall apart and condense about opposite poles. The introduction of order into heaven is also the introduction

¹ Belerophon Frag. 23.

² Herc. Fur. 1310 *et seq.*; 1334 *et seq.*

of strife. Common sense, penetrating to the Olympic banquet, throws on the table the apple of discord. The Greek told of a Titan war, the Egyptian of the revolt of Typhon, the Scandinavian fabled of Æsir and Jötuns ever battling, the Hindú of the ceaseless war between Indra and Vrita, the Fijian of the sons of Ndengi curbing the demons, the Quiche of the heavenly twins in conflict with the Princes of Xibalba, the Finn of the hostility between the realm of Kalewa and the gloomy Poijola.

In many of these nascent dualisms the relationship of the opposed forces has not been forgotten, and this is in itself a hint of the original identity of the evil and the good. Thus Çiva, the destroyer, is one in the Hindú Trimurti; Loki, the parent of a tribe of destructive agencies, is one of the sons of All-Father; Typhon is the brother of Osiris, and Aidoneus is the brother of Zeus. We may be sure that originally evil was attributed to all the gods, but that in after times one or more of them were marked out for a Benjamin's mess of wickedness, in order that the others might free themselves of the imputation of wrong-doing.

National antipathies often enough supplied the motive. When primitive races, instead of forming alliances with one another, and fusing their interests and beliefs, fell into discord, their gods became rivals, and each people regarded the deities of the hostile camp as demons of evil. We have a curious illustration of this process in the history of the Aryan race. Two of its branches separated, severed by their modes of living. One branch pursued a pastoral life, and the other the agricultural life. These two modes of existence, the antagonism of which is represented to us in the Semitic race by the fratricidal rivalry of Cain and Abel, had its counterpart among the Aryans, and, prolonged through many centuries, ended in the expulsion of

the pastors. The Iranian tribe was agricultural; the Indian tribe was pastoral. The incompatibility of their pursuits led to a hostility which has projected itself on the mythologies of the two races.

The primeval stock worshipped the Divs, the bright ones, as their name signifies: perhaps the shepherds affected this title rather than any other. Therefore to the husbandmen the Divs became devils. The Iranians called their supreme god Ahura;—enough for the Indians; they called the demons of evil Asuras. Indra is the Vaidic conqueror of the dragon Vrita; but in Persia, as Andri, he is the fell serpent.

We see a similar political antipathy infecting the demonology of the Hebrews. Baal Zebub was the great god of the Ammonites, but in the Bible he is a devil. A still more striking instance is presented by Egyptian mythology. Seth or Typhon, in the first period, was a great and holy god; he was identified with the Phœnician Baal,¹ and the Hyksos recognised him as their own supreme deity. He was, in fact, one with Osiris. Seth was but one name of the force of nature, manifested in power,² and Osiris was that same force manifest in beneficence. The unpopularity of the shepherd kings caused this name of Seth, which they employed, to fall into bad repute among the Egyptians; and Seth became a centre around which all the evil pervading the region of the gods was forced to crystallize. But a sense of his original position lingered in the minds of the Egyptians, and it was only with reserve that he was designated the genius of evil, and then only on the theory that the excess of good may cause good to be evil. "The

¹ *Revue Archéologique*, xii^{me} année, pp. 257 *seq.*

² *Plut. Is. et Os. cap. xli.* : Σὴθ ἀεὶ Αἰλύπτοι καλοῦσιν, ὅσπερ ἐστὶ καταδυναστεῦον ἢ καταβιαζόμενον.

worship of Seth was much in vogue under the sovereigns of the seventeenth dynasty, but afterwards a violent reaction took place, for the figures of this god were destroyed and mutilated with care, which renders them extremely scarce in our museums."¹ Seth underwent a third phase. By the name of Bez he was identified with the Greek Herakles, and on him was lavished all the odium with which the Egyptians regarded the Hellenes, and, scorned and hated, he figured with the attributes of the Greek deity as the devil of Egypt.

In no religion of antiquity or of modern times has dualism taken so precise a form as in that of Persia. But this dualism was no primitive feature of the Iranian creed, it was the tardy reduction to a philosophic system of a crude polytheism. Persian dualism is due to an intellectual movement within analogous to that of Greek philosophy, but with this difference, that whereas in Greece the philosophic schools stripped off the flowers which overran religion, Magian speculation trimmed them into shape. Greek philosophy took shape outside of the temple: Mazdæan philosophy remodelled the temple itself.

In the Zend religion, two beings appear as equipotential powers, engaged in deadly strife. Ormazd is the source of light, the creator of all good things, and Ahriman is the "evil-minded one," a lying, corrupting adversary, the power of blackest night. Iran is the realm of light, Turan is that of darkness; and just as the Persian was engaged in conflict with the Scythian tribes, so are the good and evil principles represented as grappling at each other's throat, with such equipoise of force that neither is permanently superior.

The Magian dualism, whilst exhibiting a concise and

¹ De Rongé : Notice Sommaire sur les Mon. d'Égypte, 1860

easily intelligible scheme, is open to grave objection. Ahura-mazda, or Ormazd, cannot be God, for it is against reason that God can be limited, hindered, and resisted. The idea of a thwarted God is philosophically inadmissible, for if God be thwarted, He is no God. This objection made itself felt in the Medo-Persian system, and Zervána Akarana, uncreate time, out of which Ormazd and Ahriman had emerged into the field of nature, and which was originally an abstraction, came to be regarded as the absolute, the principle of life, the primeval God, and Ormazd dropped into the position of a secondary deity, one who had had a beginning, and who was rather a creature of high order than a creator. We have a logical necessity moving religious systems, and disturbing their very bases. If we look on the flow of religious beliefs, we are forced to conclude that there are forces at work to set them in motion and to precipitate them onwards. Such a force is reason. In the instance we are examining, its operation is singularly apparent. In the Avesta, where we have the Iranian faith in its dualistic form, we have purest dualism. Zervána is infinite time, and nothing more: the word occurs but two or three times, and without a shadow of personality attaching to it. But in the Alexandrine period, when logic had advanced, Zervána assumes being, indistinct perhaps, but sufficiently pronounced to cause it to be regarded as the Father of the Gods¹ and the correlative of the Semitic El.

In the Hebrew doctrine of Satan we have a fourth theory, which, if not an altogether satisfactory solution to the problem of the existence of evil, is at least less objectionable than that of the Iranian. According to the later philoso-

¹ Berosus ed. Richter, p. 60. "Zerovanus . . . Medorum principium ac Deorum pater:" Orac. Sibyll. v. 48.

phy of the Hebrews, Satan is a creature, a free intelligence, once an angel of light in a condition of favour and felicity, from which he fell through his pride. Thenceforth he was filled with malignity, envy, and cruelty, which prompts him to labour to overthrow the work of God and disturb the order of the physical and moral world. Under the form of a serpent he assails those creatures who have free-will and intelligence similar to his own, but all his machinations, though seemingly successful, are overruled for good. Whilst regarding himself as a free agent, he is in fact executing the purposes of the Most High; he is an active agent, but only an agent under God. His power he exercises only on sufferance, and for a limited time. Consequently, the evil he does is not actually evil, but only relatively so. Positively it is good, but viewed in its immediate effects it is evil. The Jew, by regarding Satan as a creature of God, deriving all his power, and license to exercise that power, from God, makes the Almighty the ultimate author of evil. Thus, according to Isaiah, He says, "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things;"¹ and, according to Amos, "Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?"² Thus Satan says to God in the book of Job, "Put forth Thine hand now and touch all that he hath;" to which God answers, "All that he hath is in thy power." The sufferings of Job come from God through the medium of Satan. In the second book of Samuel, God moves David to number Israel and Judah,³ whilst in the first book of Chronicles it is said, "Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel."⁴

¹ Isa. xlv. 7.

³ 2 Sam. xxiv. 1.

² Amos iii. 6.

⁴ 1 Chron. xxi. 1.

We have another instance in the history of Ahab, who rules by violence and whose reign must be cut short. A lying spirit, or devil, enters the prophets, and by their mouths persuades the king to rush on his destruction. From one point of view it may be safely said that the devil impelled Ahab to his ruin. But the record assures us that this spirit of lies did not execute his work without power and permission given him by the Most High. "The Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee." Consequently, we may view the whole transaction from another standing-point, and thence we see that it was the work of God.¹ We may compare the Hebrew Satan to a leech. He is applied for a purpose, but he is ignorant of that purpose, and in trying to satiate his malice he is furthering the design of the Great Physician, and is profiting the patient whose bane he seeks with ardour.

This ingenious theory is the application to morals of a law of physics. The tornado that devastates a tract of land, to those whose homesteads have been wrecked, is a hideous evil. But the hurricane was a necessity in the economy of nature, and its mission was to dissipate noxious gases and restore the equilibrium of the component parts of atmospheric air. According to the view of dualism, the cycloon is an evil agency raging against God and God's creatures. According to the prime idea of man, the storm came direct from God. The Hebrew doctrine harmonizes these theories. It says, the devil desolated the land, through hate, but the tempest was necessary for the well-being of the world, therefore God permitted Satan thus to exert his power.

The Jewish theory is grand and philosophical. Experi-

¹ 1 Kings xxii.

ence teaches that many an apparent evil is an actual good. The Jew applies this observation to every evil, and if it be objected that the good result is not obvious, it is answered that this is owing to our incapacity to view every fact in all its relations.¹ At the same time, the personality of an evil principle is admitted, and indeed is insisted upon, for reasons which will become apparent when we discuss the difficulties besetting the next theory.

This, the last step in theorizing on the existence of evil, is the denial of its absolute existence altogether. "In the house of Jupiter nothing is vile;" what is unseemly, evil, and vicious, is not so *really*, but *seemingly*. We call one act sinful and another just, but each is a quality of action, necessary in its way, and in its own way proper. All the miseries and crimes which afflict us have that effect upon us only because of the narrowness of our horizon; seen in their mutual and proper relations, with an all-embracing eye, they are just and fitting.

Vice, brutality, hideousness, are aspects of things considered from one experimental point of view, but they have reality for the physical and psychological sense only; in the metaphysical sense there are no such distinctions as beauty and ugliness, good and bad. In a word, the flea is a revolting object to man, because it annoys him. But if it be considered from a superior point of view, it is "very good," for it fills a gap in creation. Who can tell but that the circle of life would have been incomplete without the flea? It is admirable in its anatomic structure, it exhibits a perfection of adaptability to the ends it is destined to fulfil. In like manner the thief, the adulterer, and the assassin, by those suffering from them, proximately or

¹ Compare Talmud, Beracoth ix. fol. 60.

remotely, are regarded as vicious and criminal; but seen with God's eye they are executing His perfect plans when one picks a pocket, the other violates a maid, and the third murders his foe. In the beautiful language of Theodore Parker: "As fast as we understand the material world will God's wisdom, power, and goodness, come forth. Then, as we cultivate the nobler faculties in us, will all fear of God vanish. Then we shall see that the terrible evils which disturb the world—slavery, war, drunkenness, the despot's oppression, the priest's hypocrisy—are only a part of the divine purpose, means for to-day, not ends for ever; they are to the world of man what night and darkness and storm and earthquake, are to the world of matter; and this prate of hell is but the cry of a child, who shall one day grow up to manhood, and sing lofty psalms with noble human voice. Then we shall find that the pain which we thought a mere tormentor, sent to vex us, was but a watchdog, which the Eternal Father set as a sentinel by the cradle of his child, to keep watch over the desire of all nations. Then we shall see that death, which man once thought came from the devil's envy, is only birth out of the mortal into the immortal." This view coincides to a very considerable extent with that already considered, but it differs from it in denying the existence of an evil principle. "Mankind," says Parker, "will outgrow this belief, which has hitherto prevailed in the theologies of the world, that there is a devil outside of God, or a worser devil of malignity inside of Him."¹ But this theory is encumbered with greater difficulties than that of the Jew; and it is only so far satisfactory as it coincides with that last reviewed. Almost every word of the apostle of absolutism in the passage above cited can be endorsed by the upholder of

¹ Theo. Parker: *Lessons from the World of Matter*, p. 262; 1865.

the Satanic theory, which is the most plausible of the two. For if the absolute existence of an evil one be denied, we are forced to conceive God as a clumsy contriver of nature, and an unjust ruler of the universe. Two difficulties at once start up, and refuse to be ignored.

The one is this. An excessive amount of pain is made use of to bring about the object in view.

The other is this. Those who suffer are not always those who learn by their experience.

It is evident to all men that evil has a place in the economy of nature, and that it is productive of good in the long run; but it is also apparent that the same amount of good might have been produced without causing suffering to any one. For instance: we have already quoted the hurricane. It is obvious that the agitation of the air necessary for the preservation of its salubrity might be effected without the destruction of acres of wheat, and burying fifty families under the ruins of their houses. The denier of absolute evil argues: "The little girl, learning the limit between the Me and Not-me, mistakes and burns her fingers in the candle's flame; the great nation learning the limits between the just and the unjust, or the expedient and the unprofitable, mistakes and loses millions of men." But is not Fanny's burn a clumsy expedient for teaching her the lesson? The momentary pang would suffice, and the subsequent blisters are so much *de trop*. Besides, the amount of pain endured is not regulated so as nicely to balance the importance of the aim. Man suffers excruciating torture from a decayed tooth, to teach him what? not to sweeten his tea. He suffers scarce a pang when he is shot through the heart. He suffers nothing when he takes laudanum.

And, secondly, men suffer through the fault of others. A

little child in its mother's absence plays with matches, and is burnt to death. It cannot profit by its experience, for its life is cut short. But its mother is taught to be more prudent. Alas! the exquisite suffering of the child leads only to make Mrs. Brown put the match-box on the chimney-piece instead of on the table. The pain was inflicted on the child for the advantage of the mother. That is, God tortures A that B may be the wiser. The King of Bokhara threw an European traveller into a trough full of sheep-ticks, and laughed to watch the vermin fatten on Frankish blood. According to the denier of absolute evil, this atrocious act was according to God's providence, in order that the Tartars might learn to revolt against an autocracy and set up a constitutional government. Unfortunately for the argument, the way in which Divine Wisdom set to work is roundabout in the extreme.

Of what profit are the pangs of maternity and the throes of death? They make none the wiser and better. If we descend from the world of man to that of beasts, we see poor brutes, to whom the faculty of profiting by experience is denied, suffering cruel torments for no conceivable purpose. A ruffian amused his vulgar mind the other day by lowering a dog inch by inch into a cauldron of boiling vitriol. How did it profit dog or man?

The fact is, that there is a vast amount of pain in the world which is not remedial, and much that is remedial, is not so to those who are racked by it.

It has been shown in a former chapter how that the idea of God rose from one of mere physical force into the region of metaphysics, and from that passed into the moral sphere.

The idea of the evil one has passed through a similar

series of stages ; but as the idea of God became one of the perfection of goodness, the idea of Satan became one of the perfection of evil. Man woke up and divided the light from the darkness, and the darkness condensed before the light, as it brightened, into the deepest night. The higher soared the conception of God, the lower dived the conception of Satan. A mediæval theologian called the devil the ape of God, because he copied Him in his acts, but did nothing well. He may be better designated as the shadow of God, owing his personality to God, objected from God, of God and by God, and yet never God.

CHAPTER XVII

ASCETICISM AND MYSTICISM

Ascetic instinct united with religious instinct—Buddhist ascetics—Asceticism of the Brahman and Mohammedan—Egyptian abstemiousness—Jewish and Ssabian fasts—Fasting among Red Indians, and Peruvians, and Mexicans—Motives for practising austerities—Facts, not motives, important—Self-denial a law of human nature ; Reason why—Polarization of force—All reformers ascetics—Asceticism may lead to polarization of force on mind or on feelings—Buddhism an instance of the former ; its deficiencies—Christian mysticism an instance of the latter ; its mischievous effects.

THE ascetic instinct is intimately united with the religious instinct.

There is scarcely a religion of ancient and modern times, certain forms of Protestantism excepted, that does not recognise asceticism as an element in its system. The prevalence of asceticism throughout the world, and the respect it attracts, make it necessary for us to inquire here what is its mainspring and why it has exerted such influence.

The principle of asceticism is abstinence from lawful pleasures, the subordination of certain faculties to others, and the restraint of certain propensities.

These pleasures are sensual, the propensities are animal, and the faculties actually or supposititiously inferior to other faculties.

Buddha taught his disciples a religion of abstinence. He gave five precepts for all men: Not to kill, not to steal, not to commit adultery, not to lie, not to be drunken. Five for professed disciples: To abstain from food out of season, from dances, songs, and music, from personal ornaments and perfumes, from soft and luxurious couches, and from money. To those further advanced in the religious life he enjoined twelve ordinances:—1. To wear only rags cast away by men in the world. 2. To wear only of these rags sufficient to serve as short skirt, nightshirt, and cape. 3. Of these to wear the cape only on one shoulder. 4. To live only on alms. 5. To take only one meal daily. 6. And that before noon. 7. To live in solitary places, and only to enter a town to ask alms. 8. To take no shelter but the foliage of trees. 9. To take rest seated at the foot of a tree. 10. And so to sleep, the back against the tree, and without lying down. 11. Not to move the carpet from place to place. 12. And to meditate nightly among the tombs on the transitoriness of all human things. All members of the community who forsook the world were called *Sramána*, “Victors over self.”

Brahmanism has also its order of ascetics. From the earliest Vaidic age, Hindú thought turned to self-immolation, and annihilation of the carnal desires. “As the practised swimmer parts with his last cork or bladder, so must the soul of the ascetic in due course part with every object, and at length meditate without an object at all.”¹ Such are the principles of the Yoga school of Hindú philosophy, in which the Yogin, or devotee, aspires by renunciation of everything that can make life enjoyable, to perfect union with the Supreme Spirit.

Mohammedanism has its fakirs, subduing the flesh by

¹ Aphorisms of the Yoga, i. § 17; ed. Ballantyne.

their austerities, and developing the spirit by their contemplations and prayers.

Fasting and self-denial were observances required of the Greeks, who desired initiation into the Mysteries. Abstinence from food, chastity, and hard couches prepared the neophyte, who broke his fast on the third or fourth day only on consecrated food. The scourge was used before the altars of Artemis, and over the tomb of Pelops.

The Egyptian priests passed their novitiate in the deserts, and when not engaged in their religious functions were supposed to spend their time in caves. They renounced all commerce with the world, and lived in contemplation, temperance, and frugality, and in absolute poverty. None might approach them without having undergone a purification, and when the priests purified themselves they only spoke with those of their own caste. During their purification, they submitted to abstinence of the most severe description, being forbidden to eat even bread, and at other times they only ate it mingled with hyssop. "The priests in Heliopolis," says Plutarch, "bring no wine into the temple, as it is not seemly to drink by day whilst the Lord and King Helios looks on; the others drink wine but very little. They have many fasts, during which they refrain from wine, and continuously meditate on Divine things, learn and teach them."¹

Apuleius says that in his initiation to the mysteries of Isis, he had to restrain his carnal appetites, eat no animal food, and drink no wine for ten days.²

Among the Ssabians, fasting was insisted on as an essential act of religion. Ibn Schoh'nah says that they were wont to fast from sunrise to sunset without allowing a

¹ Plut. *Isis et Osiris*, c. 6. See also Chæremon ap. Porphy. de *Abstinentia*, iv. 6.

² Apul. *Metam. lib. xi.*

morsel of food or drop of liquid to pass their lips, during the month Tammûz; and En-Nedîm says, that throughout the month Schobâth they ate no fat and drank no wine.¹ The Jews also had their fasts, the Jom-Kippur, the great day of atonement; and on special occasions they gave themselves up to prolonged fasts and mortifications. According to Mohammedan tradition, Noah, Abraham, and David had instituted fasts of universal obligation; which shows that before the time of the prophet, fasting was an institution among the Arabs. "Ibn Mâgah says in the chapter upon the fast day of Noah, that . . . Noah fasted all his life through except the day of the Fithr, and the tenth of H'iggah . . . and David fasted half his life, and Abraham three days every month; he observed fasting as well as breaking his fast in order throughout his whole life."²

We read of Moses fasting forty days and forty nights, of the valiant men who recovered Saul's body fasting seven days, of David fasting during his child's illness, of Esther instituting a solemn fast, of Nehemiah and Ezra summoning the people to abstinence, and of Jeremiah exhorting them to self-denial and mortification.

The Romans had their *Casta*, during which they refrained from specified food. "*Quid temperatis ab alimento panis?*" asks Arnobius, "*cui rei dedistis nomen castis; nonne illius temporis imitatio est, quo se numen ab Cereris fruge violentiâ mœroris abstinuit.*"³

The races of the New World have also an instinctive regard for self-denial and fasting. "Each primitive Indian," says Mr. Parkman, "has his guardian Manitou, to whom

¹ Chwolsohn: *Die Ssabier u. d. Ssabismus*, ii. 72; St. Petersburg, 1856.

² *Ibid.* p. 74.

³ Arnob. v. 26.

he looks for counsel, guidance, and protection. These spiritual allies are gained by the following process. At the age of fourteen or fifteen, the Indian boy blackens his face, retires to some solitary place, and remains for days without food. Superstitious expectancy and the exhaustion of abstinence rarely fail of their results. His sleep is haunted by visions, and the form which first or most often appears is that of his guardian Manitou—a beast, a bird, a fish, a serpent, or some other object, animate or inanimate. An eagle or a bear is the vision of a destined warrior; a wolf, of a successful hunter; while a serpent foreshadows the future medicine-man, or, according to others, portends disaster.”¹ Among the Caribs, a father fasts long on the birth of a son, in hopes of learning in vision the destiny of the child. The wrath of the gods is appeased, and they are made more disposed to listen to prayer, when man fasts.²

The Peruvians were required to fast before sacrificing to the gods, and to bind themselves by vows of chastity and abstinence from nourishing food.³ Fasting and mortification of the flesh was common among the Mexicans. The savages of the American continent fasted to obtain ecstatic relation with their guardian spirits; the Aztecs denied themselves food, tortured themselves with deprivation of sleep, and preserved chastity in order that they might by suffering purify their consciences. They ate but once a day, and refrained from stimulating drinks and strong diet. Fasts lasted for three, four, five, twenty, forty, sixty, and a hundred and sixty days, and even sometimes for four consecutive years. There were fasts for the whole nation,

¹ Jesuits in Canada, p. lxx.; Boston, 1867.

² Müller: *Amerikanischen Urreligionen*, p. 214; Basel, 1855.

³ *Ibid.* pp. 376, 393.

family fasts, and fasts for the individual.¹ Numerous congregations of monks, like the Jewish schools of the prophets and the religious orders of Buddhism, were to be found dotted over the country under vows of perpetual celibacy. Parents dedicated their children to the cloister from infancy. The monks were called Tlamacazqui, and executed the offices of priests and instructors of the young; but all priests were not monks. There were ascetic orders for old men, and nunneries for widows devoted to the worship of Centeotl among the Totomacs, monastic orders among the Toltecs dedicated to the service of Quetzalcoatl, and others among the Aztecs consecrated to Tezcatlipoca.

The motives upon which ascetics act are different: they are of less importance than the fact of a prevalence of asceticism. This prevalence proves that there is in mankind an instinct directing him towards self-denial and the subjugation of his fleshly lusts; the motives are an after-thought, and may be expected to vary considerably. The motives are either:—

1. That the Deity is supposed to delight in pain, and that He must be propitiated by suffering.

2. Or, that He is so inexorably just, that man must atone by suffering for his sins, so that by undergoing punishment voluntarily, in this life, he may escape suffering in the life to come.

3. Or, that matter is evil, and that therefore it is man's mission on earth to macerate his body, in order that he may disentangle his soul from the bondage of material existence.

4. Or again, that human nature is incapable of being harmoniously developed, and that it becomes necessary for man, if he would attain elevation either above his fellow-

¹ Clavigero: *Hist. Mex.* i. 353, 397 *et seq.*; 1780.

men, or above his inferior appetites, to make choice among his faculties, select the highest, and sacrifice the others to the education of that one.

The dynamic force in asceticism is the desire to attain the highest and most permanent happiness. Now, happiness is to be found either in the co-ordination of all the faculties, mental and bodily, or in the development of the highest faculties at the expense of those less noble.

If a man is content to remain on the dead level of the majority of other men, he will adopt the first course.

If he feels a desire to rise above them, he adopts the second.

It is a law of nature, that if important results are to be attained, certain portions of our faculties have to be steadily subordinated to others. "An imaginative school-boy, who likes day-dreaming, does not find learning by heart a very pleasant process, but in the early stages of his mental advance it is more important to train his memory than his fancy: it has to wait awhile. A less intellectual youngster, whose passion is to be stroke of an university eight, has to go into training which interferes a good deal with his enjoyment of wine-parties and suppers. The abstinence from social amusements incumbent on a man who desires to rise rapidly and surely at the Bar is considerable; and similar examples might be diversified almost indefinitely. Nor is it quite enough to say that these checks are merely temporary. They involve the formation of habit, which is not temporary. And, moreover, it is easy to show, by a familiar instance, that it is not always possible to develop the whole man harmoniously. Take the sense of taste. The subtle education of the palate takes time as well as anything else; and the man who is to pronounce at first

sip whether he has a vintage wine of 1842 or 1846 before him, or who is to decide unerringly on the rival merits of Velouté or Allemande as the fundamental sauce for a new dish, is more than likely to become a selfish epicure, caring for nothing higher than his dinner. And the deepest thing in all is suffering. It has been truly said that if a wedding-party and a funeral meet, the latter will cast a gloom on the former, and not be lightened itself. Suffering is found, by all experience, to be necessary in order to bring out whatever is best and highest in man. The kind of suffering may, and does, vary for each person, but a man or a woman who has not toiled and suffered can no more be great than a lump of ore which has never felt the furnace can be a golden crown, or a block of marble untouched by mallet and chisel be a lovely statue. Men with no specially religious feeling admit this principle in their practice, and the vagaries of the Alpine club are but a grotesque caricature of the spiritual joy of triumph won by endurance. Consequently, a religion which puts suffering aside not only fails to have any further relation with the great majority of mankind, whose daily lot it is to endure, but it fails to awaken any ideal in its own followers, which may nerve them to exceptional exertion.”¹

For intellectual development the spontaneous force must be precipitated on the cerebral hemispheres, and then the action of the body becomes automatic. For sentimental development, it must be turned upon the sensory ganglia, and then the cerebrum subserves the sensorium. For animal development it must be directed upon the cerebellum which governs the operations of the body.

In *reverie*, the mind wanders over a thousand different subjects independent of volition, and the attention is not

¹ Church Times, vol. vii. p. 117.

nailed to any one point. The spontaneous force may be represented in its normal condition, as existing in a similar state of waking-dream. It sustains the operations of the body, mind, and feelings in even balance, and man in such a condition lives the life of a zoophyte. But directly he polarizes his individual force on his reason it produces mental activity, when on his feelings it excites sentiment, and when on his bodily functions it converts him into a sensualist.

Great students are prone to fall into a state of abstraction. Abstraction is the absorption of vital energy on the oxidation of one portion of cerebral matter, so that the senses only took cognizance of such affairs as are connected with the subject of thought. Sir Isaac Newton is said to have used a lady's finger as a tobacco-stopper when in a state of mental absorption. The mind at such times only responds to influences allied to that on which it is fixed. In *St. Ronan's Well*, Scott introduces Mr. Touchwood to an abstracted clergyman, Mr. Cargill, whom he finds *lost* in Palestine, and whom he cannot recall by any direct address. At length the student raised his head, and inquired in soliloquy, "From Acon, Accor, or St. John d'Acre, to Jerusalem, how far?" "Twenty-three miles N.N.W.," answered the visitor, without hesitation. Mr. Cargill expressed no surprise at a question put by himself being answered by the voice of another; it was the tenor of the answer alone which he attended to in his reply: "Ingulphus and Jeffrey Winesauf do not agree in this," he murmured.

When the whole attention is riveted on the intellect, the utmost indifference to the concerns of the body prevails. Archimedes waved off the ruffian who was about to kill him, saying, "One moment! let me just finish this

problem." Count Zinzendorf read a book in which he was deeply interested, quite regardless of a venomous serpent which coiled itself about his leg. The fact of the digestive apparatus becoming disordered in students is an instance of the manner in which the vital attention, being focused on the mind, neglects the body. That intense mental application destroys for the time the powers of procreation has been already stated. On the other hand, the concentration of the spontaneous force on the body lowers the tone of the mind. Immediately after a meal thought is difficult; because then that vital force is busy in the stomato-gastric ganglia, and cannot be spared elsewhere. That luxury and sexual indulgence are ruinous to mental, and therefore to moral, health is well known to physicians.

We shall see, when considering mysticism, that the precipitation of the spontaneous power on the affections exclusively, acts disastrously upon both the bodily and intellectual well-being.

From whatever motive an ascetic life is undertaken, the result is accumulation of force. The ascetic cuts himself off, as much as possible from all means of liberating force. His voluntary celibacy and abstinence from active work place at his disposal all that force which would be discharged by a man in the world in muscular action, and in domestic affection. By fasting, he withdraws his spontaneous force, to a very considerable extent, from the stomato-gastric ganglia, and uses it for the construction and transubstantiation of cerebrie neurine. Withdrawal from society intensifies his individuality, and, unless the ideas formed in his brain be such as can excite his emotion, he becomes completely self-centred. But if the object of his contemplation be one which is calculated to

draw out his affections, the result is a co-ordinate accumulation of mental and affectional power.

All great religious movements have been due to ascetics, for this simple reason, that asceticism generates force rapidly, and the accumulation of power continues till the ascetic goes mad and expends it in ravings, or falling among his fellow-men, like a bombshell, explodes and wrecks old constitutions that new ones may rise on their ruins.

Sakya-Muni in his twenty-ninth year fled from his father's palace, and wrapping himself in a coarse shroud, in which had been rolled the body of a female slave, drawn from her grave and sown together with his own hands, he spent six years in solitude on the banks of the Nanandyana, in rigorous maceration of the flesh, and abstraction from society, and thus acquired that momentum which broke off a large fragment of Hindú thought from Brahmanism, and has strewn Asia with Buddhist sects.

Judaism was, in some respects, the least ascetic of religions, but in it appear prophets, wild men from the deserts and mountains, whose lives were severely austere; and it was they, and not the Levites, who kept the faith from dying out. Moses, the founder, had been brought up among the Egyptian priests; and, as we have seen, that was an ascetic school of stern discipline and self-subjugation. That he practised what he had learned in Egypt appears from his retreat to Sinai for a fast of forty days, before giving to the people the great Law. Islam owed its rapid spread to the asceticism of Mahomed and his followers Abu Obeidah, Kaled, and Omar. It was in the flashes of wild enthusiasm between his epileptic fits, in the cavern of Hara, that the Koran was indited which was to be the revelation of truth to a quarter of the world.

Even Greek Paganism had its confessors of this kind, and, without dwelling on the Stoics and Cynics, it is enough to mention the fresh start given to the influence of the Academy after the death of Xenocrates, by the austere life of that very Polemon whom a chance discourse of the elder teacher had converted to philosophy from the most dissolute companionship in Athens. The great names which have shed lustre on the Christian Church, and spread its influence widest throughout the world, all testify to the same truth. Origen, Cyprian, Anthony, Athanasius, Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome, Martin of Tours, Benedict of Nursia, in the earlier period; Gregory the Great, Boniface of Metz, Bede, Lanfranc, Anselm, Bernard, Thomas Aquinas, A Kempis, in the Middle Ages; Xavier, Vincent de Paul, Arnould, Fénelon, in more recent times, are but a few out of hundreds which might be readily cited.

When the Roman Empire was crumbling under its own weight, and the barbarian hordes hung along its borders like a huge billow ready to fall and sweep it out of remembrance, obliterating all its treasures of literature and art, ascetics plunged into the advancing tide, which the armed legions of Rome could not withstand, and subdued it by the power of their characters. "The influence of these hermits," says Mr. Kingsley, "subtle, often transformed and modified again and again, but still potent from its very subtleness, is being felt around us in many a puzzle—educational, social, political; and promises to be felt still more during the coming generation; and to have studied thoroughly one of them—say the life of S. Anthony by S. Athanasius—is to have had in our hands (whether we knew it or not) the key to many a lock, which just now refuses either to be tampered with or burst open."¹

¹ *The Hermits*, p. 18; London, 1868.

Even the great founders of Protestantism, with one conspicuous exception, were men of austerity, though asceticism was incompatible with their principles. Calvin was a man of most self-denying life. The type of religion which Knox introduced into Scotland was one of rejection of all that is attractive to the sense, and it is only now breaking up. The English Puritans and Quakers fasted and watched whilst the Cavaliers revelled; and the severities which Wesley and Whitfield voluntarily underwent are well known. There is just one exception. Luther, a man of coarse and vigorous animalism, was no ascetic, but he was a man of immense spontaneous power, and his seclusion at Wartburg served to concentrate his force.

If asceticism were to come into vogue again, it would exercise an influence over men of the present day quite as great as it did in former ages—not because it is right or wrong, but because, from a positive point of view, it has a condensed dynamic force which will bowl down all the feeble and foolish who fritter away their energies, and make no effort to concentrate their will on the cultivation of their nobler faculties.

Asceticism is, then, the withdrawal of the vital force from the muscles, that it may be exerted on the generation of brain-matter. The body is a factory in which the machinery fabricates muscular fibre, adipose tissue, and neurine. At will, the greater part of the power may be directed to the production of any one of these substances, to the neglect of the others. Further, it may be turned to the development of one nervous ganglion at the expense of another. The cerebrum may be the object of its attention, and the sensorium may be overlooked, and *vice versâ*. Judicious asceticism labours to build up both side by side; injudicious asceticism endeavours to rear one at the expense

of the other. The mental system is then over-balanced, and the result is either, what for want of a better term we will call idealism, or mysticism. The former is a self-concentrated condition, without sympathy and interest in anything which does not fall into the vortex of the one idea; the other is a condition of exaggerated sentiment, indifferent to reason and destructive of judgment.

We have crucial examples of these opposite results in Buddhism and in Christian mysticism.

The Buddhist renounces the life of sense, passion, and consciousness, for that of pure bliss, when he becomes a Buddha; and lives the life of intelligence freed from all limits—the human intellect in its infinity. All Buddhas are in reality one, and the great object of the Buddhist's austerities is to lose himself in this one Buddha: the very meaning of the word is intelligence. But this intelligence is not active, it is quiescent, divested of all material ideas, of qualities and conditions. The mind is educated to rest absorbed in contemplation of its own essence, divested of its personality. We do not know in what consists the essence of matter. A body is composed of atoms: when these change, the body changes; when the body is resolved to its component parts, the atoms only exist. What, then, is a body? At the foundation of all existence there must be something. What that is, we do not know. The Buddhist, therefore, calls it ignorance. This ignorance is the principle co-existing with intelligence by virtue of which Dharma, or matter, *is*. To escape from all material conceptions, from every sensual feeling, is, then, to approach most nearly to the universal Buddha. Thus the mind is given no person and no object to which the affections may cling, but is required to fade into a state, so vague and negative that there is not a spot therein on which sentiment can find anchorage.

The Buddhists of Nepal are considered to be theists, and their Deity is Adi-Buddha. Their worship approaches closely that of Brahmanism. But in Ava and Ceylon the purest form of Buddhism is preserved intact. In Ceylon, especially, owing more or less to insulation and seclusion, it has remained for upwards of two thousand years unchanged in its leading characteristics.

The ethic code of Buddha can hardly be ranked lower than that of Christianity, and it is immeasurably superior to every heathen system that the world has ever seen, not excepting that of Zarathustra. It forbids the taking of life from even the humblest animal in creation, it prohibits falsehood, dishonesty, intemperance, and incontinence—vices which are referable to three predominant passions, concupiscence, anger, and ignorance. These involve hypocrisy, pride, and want of charity, ungenerous suspicion, covetousness in every form, evil wishes to others, the betrayal of secrets, and the propagation of slander, all which forms of evil are strictly forbidden. On the other hand, every conceivable virtue and excellence are simultaneously enjoined—the forgiveness of injuries, the practice of charity, reverence of virtue, the cherishing of learning, submission to discipline, veneration for parents, the care of one's family, a sinless vocation, contentment and gratitude, subjection to reproof, moderation in prosperity, submission under affliction, and cheerfulness at all times. "Those," said Sakya-Muni, "who practise all these virtues, and are not overcome by evil, will enjoy the perfection of happiness, and attain to supreme renown."

According to the institutes of its founders, the worship of Buddhism was not to be one of form and ceremony, but to be an appeal to reason alone. Religion, therefore, it can hardly be called, for it opens no field for the play of the

emotions. It is rather a school of philosophy. It is the Protestantism of Oriental religion—the religion of intelligence, not of sentiment—one which seeks abstractions rather than concretions, morality rather than dogma. This close resemblance seems to have been felt on first contact of Calvinism and Buddhism, for we find in 1684 the Dutch government importing as its own expense Buddhist missionaries from Arracan to Ceylon to oppose the progress of Catholicism.

Mild and benevolent as are the aspects and designs of Buddhism, its theories have failed to realize in practice the reign of virtue which they proclaim. Beautiful as is the body of its doctrines, it wants the vivifying energy of the emotions to ensure its ascendancy and power. Its cold philosophy and thin abstractions, however they might exercise the faculties of anchorites, have proved insufficient of themselves to arrest man in his career of passion and pursuit; and the bold experiment of influencing the heart and regulating the conduct of mankind by the external decencies and the mutual dependencies of morality, unsustained by higher hopes, has proved in this instance an unredeemed and hopeless failure. It was fear which threw multitudes at the feet of Buddha—the fear of an eternity of revolution through cycles of animal existences; and in the hope he opened to them of escape from this endless whirl of misery lay its sole dynamic power. That fear removed, Buddhism has no propelling force, and stationary and uninfluential on men's conducts it must henceforth remain. "The inculcation of the social virtues as the consummation of happiness here and hereafter, suggests an object sufficiently attractive for the bulk of mankind," says Sir J. Emerson Tennent; "but Buddhism presents along with it no adequate knowledge of the means which

are indispensable for its attainment. In confiding all to the mere strength of the human intellect, and the enthusiastic self-reliance and determination of the human heart, it makes no provision for defence against those powerful temptations before which ordinary resolution must give way; and it affords no consoling support under those overwhelming afflictions by which the spirit is prostrated and subdued, when unaided by the influence of a purer faith and unsustained by its confidence in a diviner power. From the contemplation of the Buddhist all the awful and unending realities of a future life are withdrawn—his hopes and his fears are at once mean and circumscribed; the rewards held in prospect by his creed are insufficient to incite him to virtue, and its punishments too remote to deter him from vice. Thus, insufficient for time, and rejecting eternity, the utmost triumph of his religion is to live without fear, and to die without hope.”¹

Socially, and in its effects upon individuals, the result of the system in Ceylon has been apathy almost approaching to infidelity. The mass of the population are profoundly ignorant of, and utterly indifferent to, the tenets of their creed. In their daily intercourse and acts, morality and virtue, so far from being apparent in practice, are barely discernible as the exception. “The same results appear in the phases of Buddhism beyond India,” says M. Maupied; “in the north of Asia and in China, it has arrived at a sort of speculative atheism, which has not only arrested proselytism, but which is self-destructive, and which in the end will completely ruin it.”² Wherever it exhibits vitality it has renounced its principles, and has called to its aid sentiment, which has resolved Buddhism into hero worship,

¹ Christianity in Ceylon, p. 227 ; London, 1850.

² Maupied : *Essai sur l'Origine des Peuples Anciens*, p. 275.

and has attached its votaries to the temples by the ties of affection.

Buddhism, according to the definition of religion which I have laid down—that is, the co-ordination of intellectual activity and sentiment in the pursuit of the highest and most lasting happiness—breaks down; it is not a religion but a philosophy. The same must be said of every theosopheme which does not draw out and give scope for the development of the affectional instincts. There is, however, no more instructive study than that of Buddhism, which has worked out the schemes of certain European philosophers of our own day, and has shown experimentally their inadequacy to meet the exigencies of human nature.

We shall now turn our attention to Mysticism, which is the exaggeration of sentiment.

Mysticism is produced by the combustion of the grey vascular matter in the sensorium—the thalami optici and the corpora striata. Mysticism may be combined with intellectual action, in which case the grey matter in the cerebral hemispheres undergoes oxidation as well. To some extent the action of the cerebrum is necessitated, for the emotions are excited by ideas; the reason may control the affections, but in full-blown mysticism the intellect is a mere slave to the vagaries of the sentiment.

All religion is more or less mystical, because it leans more or less heavily on the sentiment; and all religions are more or less ideal, for they lay more or less stress on the intellectual faculty. Man is disposed to cultivate the reasonable side of religion, and woman the emotional; for in man the cerebrum is larger in proportion to the sensorium, than in woman. The imagination is acted upon by the senses, and in turn reacts on them. The senses, under

the influence of imagination, then present to us as exterior objects those ideas which are created by the mind. Such is the character of visions and apparitions. They are manifestations of a disordered mental condition. In sleep we see and hear and taste without the medium of the senses, for the mental faculties are out of joint, and images arise and disappear, which the judgment, lying dormant, does not seek to classify. Sleep is the suspension, or temporary annihilation, of the thinking faculty, but the imaginative faculty in imperfect sleep remains wakeful. The organs of the senses are in repose, but images of the past unwind and entangle in the seat of sensation without order, and without consent of the will. There is no sensation, no perception of sensation, without attention. When, then, internal impressions absorb the attention, external impressions are necessarily unheeded, and are as if they were not. The individual is entirely delivered over to his interior reflections, to his meditations; he has broken with the outer world—so far, at least, as regards his thoughts. He is in a veritable dream, always within the limits of the same thoughts. The state of the mystic is one of attention to an image or a chain of images, and the concentration upon them of all the passionate ardour of his affection. This state, when it enters the ecstatic stage, is closely allied to somnambulism, for in each, the sensory organs convey no impressions to the thalami optici, which are intent on some ideal object. Sensibility and intellect bear the same relation to one another as instinct and reason, and each has its own nervous seat. The sensitive faculties, and the instinct also, are generally found to be predominant in youth, and more especially in the female sex; we might expect, therefore, to find mysticism predominate among young persons and women. And this is precisely what we do find.

Among men, some are more predisposed to sensitive and ecstatic affections than others, and these again are subjects for mystic religionism.

Again, to become a true mystic, the intellect, the reason, and the judgment must either be atrophied, or must have been systematically kept in abeyance. Thus we find that a condition of the first importance to religious exaltation of feeling is ignorance. Tertullian emphatically tramples human learning under foot, appealing, not to the wisdom of the wise, but to the rude uncultivated conscience;¹ not to the tried and cultivated mind, formed in schools and libraries, but to the raw instinct of the workshop and the street, which refuses to know anything save Christ crucified, and believes faith to be all in all.² Fanatics have generally risen from among the lower orders, because of their ignorance and the utterly uncultivated condition of their judgments. The pious maniacal sect of flagellants which swept Europe in the fourteenth century, burning synagogues and massacring Jews, "consisted," says Hecker, "chiefly of persons of the lower class." The biographies of Whitfield and Wesley attest, in almost every page, that their labours resulted in conversions chiefly among miners, colliers, and the most ignorant. During the preaching of the latter at Bristol, "one and another, and another," we are told, "sank to the earth. They dropped on every side as thunderstruck." Men and women by "scores were sometimes strewed on the ground at once, insensible as dead men." During a Methodist revival in Cornwall, 4,000 people, it is computed, fell into convulsions. "They remained during this condition so abstracted from every earthly thought, that they stayed two, and sometimes three days and nights together in the chapels, agitated all the time by spasmodic move-

¹ De Test. Animæ, 1.

² De Præscrip. Hær. 7.

ments, and taking neither repose nor refreshment. The symptoms followed each other usually as follows: A sense of faintness and oppression, shrieks as if in the agony of death or the pains of labour, convulsions of the muscles of the eyelids—the eyes being fixed and staring—and of the muscles of the neck, trunk, and arms; sobbing respiration tremors, and general agitation, and all sorts of strange gestures. When exhaustion came on, patients usually fainted, and remained stiff and motionless until their recovery.”¹

Among young hysterical females, and among men with uneducated judgments, a certain state of body, exciting society, stimulating sermons, will produce all the phenomena of religious ecstasy, mysticism, and Wesleyan conversion. The following description of a Revival is from the pen of a writer apparently well acquainted with the manner in which mysticism continues to operate in England at the present day: “To those who have never attended a Revival, and are therefore unaware of its character, a brief sketch of the proceedings may be of interest. It is preceded by a sermon, interspersed with hymns and extempore prayers, often of an unexceptionable character, and the sermon itself of singular vigour and considerable eloquence, delivered with tremendous energy and action. At the conclusion of the discourse, those who would leave the chapel are prevented. If a person, especially a female, is seen to open a pew-door, the preacher, or one of his satellites, rushes up, and thrusts or drags the person up the chapel. The whole place rings with shrieks and groans. The noise becomes deafening; every one who considers himself or herself in a converted state, cries out to the Almighty vociferously. In the mean time the patient is forced on to a cushion, about which men stand crying and

¹ Westminster Review, New Series, xvii. 194.

exhorting, and calling on the Spirit to descend. 'Pray, pray, pray,' is roared into the frightened person's ears, whilst the waving hands, the passes, and the fixed eyes of the operators, produce a mesmeric condition, in which consciousness is suspended, and the individual performed on does what he is bidden without feeling power to resist, or retaining afterwards a reminiscence of what has actually taken place. If those who have been converted at a Revival are questioned, in many cases it will be found that what transpired has been completely forgotten, and that the whole has seemed like a frightful dream. Others become hysterical, and scream convulsively. Their state is secure; the agonised shrieks are tokens of the operation of Divine grace. It happens often that the excited condition of the whole congregation, the noise, the lights, the heat, the magnetic influence, affect a witness who is not of the elect, and he lifts his voice in the chorus of yells."¹

In these cases the nerves are thrown into agitation by external influences. The influence is, however, often internal. Towards spring, when the sensual passion is at its height, and is under suppression, it sometimes produces hysterical erotic fits, which, taking a religious turn, the passion relieves itself in ecstasies of spiritual exaltation, and in exclamations sufficiently suggestive of their origin. Marie de l'Incarnation, a woman of intense piety and heroism, says of herself in her journal: "Going to prayer, I trembled in myself, and exclaimed, 'Let us go into a solitary place, my dear Love, that I may embrace you, *à mon aise*, and that breathing my soul into you, it may be but yourself only, in the union of love. O my Love, when shall I embrace you? Have you no pity on me in the torments that I suffer? Alas! alas! my Love, my

¹ Through Flood and Flame, ii. 49; Bentley, 1863.

Beauty, my Life ! instead of healing my pain, you take pleasure in it. Come, let me embrace you, and die in your sacred arms.' ” And again she writes : “ Then, as I was spent with fatigue, I was forced to say, ‘ My divine Love, since you wish me to live, I pray you let me rest a little, that I may the better serve you ; ’ and I promised Him that afterwards I would suffer myself to consume in His chaste and divine embraces.”¹ Some of her pupils also had mystical marriages with Christ ; and the impassioned rhapsodies of one of them being overheard, she nearly lost her character, as it was thought that she was apostrophizing an earthly lover. A hagiographer reports that in her hallucinations, kindled by senses imperfectly mortified, S. Christina, a virgin and abbess, believed herself to have received favours which left her no longer a virgin ; and he gravely ends his memoir : “ At post plures annos in monastica observantia sanctissime, prudentissimeque transactos, cœlesti sponso copulata est.”²

The intense application of the attention on a particular mental image will produce hallucinations and trance, and cataleptic fits, and the reason is as slowly and surely undermined as is the constitution. When the Protestant convulsionists and visionaries of the Cevennes found refuge in England, their ecstasies disappeared, and with tears they lamented the fact, thinking that God had deserted them. The change of air and scenery had distracted their attention, and ceasing to be visionary rebels, they became rational citizens, before the last glimmer of common sense had expired.

The mystic, confusing imaginations with sensations, objects his ideas, and supposes he is leaving himself, when he

¹ Casgrain : *Vie de Marie de l'Incarnation*.

² Dumoustier : *Sacrum Gynæceum*, iv. Decemb. p. 484.

is, in fact, self-concentrated. Madame Guyon, in her ardent devotion and straining towards an ineffable union with the Deity, was thus wholly self-deceived. She wrote:—

“ I love the Lord—but with no love of mine,
For I have none to give ;
I love the Lord—but with a love divine,
For by Thy love I live.
I am as nothing, and rejoice to be
Emptied and lost, and swallowed up in Thee !”

In the East we have Sufism, which is a form of sentimental mysticism precisely similar to that which has developed in Western Christendom. The Sufi seeks by concentration of affection on God to lose his own identity, as, on the other hand, the Buddhist sought by abstraction of mind to destroy his individuality. The following fable from Jelaleddin will illustrate this. It represents human love seeking admission into the sanctuary of the Divinity. “ One knocked at the Beloved’s door; and a voice from within cried, ‘ Who is there ?’ Then he answered, ‘ It is I.’ And the voice said, ‘ This house will not hold me and thee ;’ so the door remained shut. Then the lover sped away into a wilderness, and fasted and prayed in solitude. And after a year he returned, and knocked again at the door, and again the voice demanded, ‘ Who is there ?’ and he said, ‘ It is Thou,’ then the door was opened to him.”

We must not seek to find careful analysis of thought among these ecstatic mystics, whose god is their own fancy, and whose religion is their disordered feelings. They are persons of ardent imaginations, with their senses in sur-excitation, striving to lift the veil which conceals God, and succeeding only in therein entangling themselves.

It is in India that mystic ecstasy reaches its final excess, in the hope inspired by Yoga philosophy in the devotee of

obtaining the Ciddha, or union with the Divinity. On the borders of the Ganges, the Yogin strives by every exaggeration of torture to emancipate his soul, and confound it with God; falling into raptures of ecstatic love, his soul addresses the Deity as a wife speaks to her husband. Yogins swarming with vermin, covered with dirt, mixing filth with their food, running skewers through their cheeks, suspending themselves by hooks thrust into their flesh, standing on one foot for many years, lying for half a lifetime upon sharp nails, strive by withdrawing their affections from all things here below, to fix them with greater intensity on the Divinity above.

They labour under the same delusion as Madame Guyon, Marie de l'Incarnation, and Wesley, in supposing that religion consists exclusively of sentimentality, and that the affections, without the intellect, can reach and apprehend God.

Religion, to rise, must mount on two wings—Reason and Sentiment; and he who attempts to rise on one, remains fluttering vainly on the ground.

It is mournful to contemplate the change of character in the saints of the Catholic Church as ages pass away. Formerly, they were the leaders at once of intellect and of piety; men fervent in their zeal, and keen in their intelligence; and now they are ecstasies, crazy nuns and sentimental boys. At the head of the list stand Augustine, Ambrose, Athanasius, Chrysostom; and at the tail, Marie Alacoque, and Aloysius Gonzaga.

CHAPTER XVIII

SACRIFICE

The theory of compensation for wrong done—the basis of criminal law—Illustrations—Saxon, Indian, Icelandic law—The theory of compensation applied to religious wrongs—originates sacrifice—Life and honour the two best gifts—Rites of Moloch and Mylitta—Human sacrifices—among the Carthaginians—Arabs—Egyptians—Persians—Greek islands—Greeks—Romans—Gauls and Britons—Germans—Lithuanians—Scandinavians—American Indians—Peruvians—Aztecs—Dahomians—The prevalence of sacrifice not an evidence of a consciousness of sin—Expiatory sacrifices—when instituted—The sense of sin—The demand for expiation—Vicarious suffering according to natural law—Suffering the means of obtaining benefits.

WHEN an injury has been done by one man to another, he who has done the wrong must be compelled to make compensation for the wrong done, if he will not do so of his own accord. This is a law of social life. Without it society would be broken up. If every man might maltreat his neighbour without suffering for it, each man would be a centre of repulsion from whom every one else would fly. This law is a necessity, and is therefore an instinct, of humanity.

Among barbarous tribes, the person who is wronged redresses his wrong with his own hand. The community, however, claims a right of interfering between the parties, and fixing the amount of compensation due for the injury done. Upon this simple principle the whole fabric of

criminal law is built up. Revenge is a duty and a right, because it is a necessity. But the mode in which the revenge is effected is ruled by the tradition of the race. Among the Californian Indians if the blood of a savage be shed, it is incumbent on his relatives to wipe it out with the blood of a member of another tribe, and often a guiltless person is tomahawked for the purpose. But among more civilized races, the family which has suffered may forego their vengeance, and take a compensation in goods or money for the loss sustained. Out of this arose those arbitrary tariffs for wounds or loss of life which are common among American Indians of the present day, and were prevalent among our own Iroquois and Seminole ancestors. These tariffs, settled by the tribe, are the first elements of the law of nations. It is the characteristic of the Saxon laws that they aimed at compensation, rather than retribution, and although they sanctioned capital punishment, they endeavoured in all cases to substitute a penalty in its place. The fine inflicted on a murderer was regulated according to the "were," or sum at which the life of the murdered party was valued: thus, if a man slew a freeman, he was to make compensation with a hundred shillings; the sum if he killed his slave was merely nominal, as it was supposed that he himself was the chief sufferer. If a man broke into the house of another, he was fined six shillings, and if a thief took away property from a dwelling, he was to make compensation with three times the value of the goods. Three shillings were deemed sufficient compensation for a broken rib, while a fine of twenty shillings was inflicted for a dislocation of the shoulder. If a man cut off the foot or struck out the eye of another, he was compelled to make satisfaction with fifty shillings. Each tooth had its fixed price; for a front tooth, six shil-

lings were demanded; for a canine tooth, four; and for a molar, only one shilling; the pain incurred by a loss of a double tooth, however, led King Alfred to alter this portion of the law as unjust, and he raised the price of a molar to fifteen shillings. So also was the price of each finger and toe set down in the Saxon doom-book; even the very nails of the little fingers were protected by the decrees of Witan, and a fine of one shilling was inflicted for their loss; a thumb-nail was to be compensated with three times that amount.¹

Mr. Parkman, in his "History of the Jesuit Missions in Canada," gives us a curious picture of Indian atonement for murder. A Frenchman had been killed by a Huron, and the tribe came to the Jesuits to make compensation for the act. "A kind of arena had been prepared, and here were hung the fifty presents in which the atonement essentially consisted—the rest, amounting to as many more, being merely accessory. The Jesuits had the right of examining them all, rejecting any that did not satisfy them, and demanding others in place of them. The naked crowd sat silent and attentive, while the orator in the midst delivered the fifty presents in a series of harangues, which the tired listener has not thought it necessary to preserve. Then came the minor gifts, each with its significance explained in turn by the speaker. First, as a sepulchre had been provided the day before for the dead man, it was now necessary to clothe and equip him for his journey to the next world; and to this end three presents were made. They represented a hat, a coat, a shirt, breeches, stockings, shoes, a gun, powder and bullets; but they were in fact something quite different, as wampum, beaver-skins, and the like. Next came several gifts to close up the wounds

¹ Thorpe : *Ancient Laws of England*, pp. 42, 48, &c.

of the slain. Then followed three more. The first closed the chasm in the earth, which had burst through horror of the crime. The next trod the ground firm that it might not open again; and here the whole assembly arose and danced, as custom required. The last placed a large stone over the closed gulf, to make it doubly secure. Now came another series of presents, seven in number: to restore the voices of all the missionaries; to invite the men in their service to forget the murder; to appease the Governor when he should hear of it; to light the fire at Sainte Marie; to open the gate; to launch the ferry-boat, in which the Huron visitors crossed the river; and to give back the paddle to the boy who had charge of the boat. The Fathers, it seems, had the right of exacting two more presents, to rebuild their house and church—supposed to have been shaken to the earth by the late calamity—but they forebore to urge the claim.”¹

In ancient Iceland, when a man had been killed, his son or next of kin, as the case might be, had three courses open to him. He might in his turn kill the person who had deprived his father of life; he might bring him before the court, and obtain on him sentence of outlawry; or he might receive a fine, in which case no further notice was taken of the transaction. In the Teutonic codes each limb had its tax, and a man knew beforehand how far his money would allow him to execute revenge or anger, by cutting off another man's nose, or by rendering him a cripple for life. In the Scandinavian codes there was nothing of this kind. The sentence on murder or breach of the peace was exile, which could only be escaped by satisfying the claims of the injured person with silver, and so preventing the suit from entering the law court.²

¹ Parkman : *Jesuits in Canada*, p. 359 ; Boston, 1867.

² Grágás : Hafnia, 1829.

This idea of making compensation for wrong done, which is prevalent in every society, has penetrated into nearly every religion as well. Defeat in battle, disappointment in projects, sickness, pain, hunger, death, are all supposed to be due to a God, and to be punishments executed by Him on those who have interfered with His rights, or infringed His prerogatives. Consequently, men seek to propitiate Him, by offering sacrifice, which is in religion what mulct is in law. When the ancient Norsemen suffered from famine, they supposed that the *Æsir* were wroth with them, and they endeavoured to appease them with the sacrifice of their king.¹ When a man was born blind, the Jews believed that he or his parents had sinned;² and the Greeks, when detained by contrary winds at Aulis, were bidden to sacrifice Iphigenia, because Artemis was angry with her father for having killed her stag.

The idea formed of the Deity was so low, and so completely a reflexion of the idea formed by each man of his neighbour, that it is only what might be expected, to find the transactions of men with God a reproduction of their transactions with one another. Men thought that the gods heaped on them benefits or ills, according as they were disposed towards them. And as they knew that among their fellow-men a gift turneth away anger, they attempted to bribe the gods to favour them, precisely as they would treat a foe or a neutral, whose anger was dreaded, or whose assistance was solicited.

The first offerings were probably flowers, fruits, and animals. But, because the most precious possession man has in the world is life, he often immolated himself to the gods. We have seen how he does that, in the chapter on Asceticism. But, just as a warrior to avoid an adversary

¹ *Heimskringla*, *Saga i. c. 18.*

² *John ix. 2.*

more powerful than himself retires behind a crowd, which he exposes to the fury of his antagonist; so, to appease the anger of the gods and to spare his own life, the savage casts another as victim to their ferocity. Thus originated human sacrifices. Thenceforth the medium became *hostia*, for it was a *hostis*, an enemy, who was immolated to the gods. Worship became the perpetual effusion of blood, and prayer an imprecation against the object dedicated to Divine vengeance. The word *sacer* and its synonyms in all the languages of antiquity signify at once, devoted to the gods, by sacrifice, and malediction on the head of the victim.

The sacrifice was not always a bribe offered to the gods, nor a compensation for some wrong supposed to have been done; it was sometimes a thank-offering. Under a reign of terror, when the deities were regarded as cruel, jealous, and malignant powers, men could not love them, but when harvests were plentiful, and all went well with them, their hearts overflowed, and they sought by sacrifice to testify to the gods that gratitude which they felt. This motive was rare enough, doubtless, but it did exist occasionally; and the desire to give to heaven the very best thing known, and that most precious in man's eyes, would naturally lead him to offer upon the altar the blood of human victims.

Next in value to the life of man is the honour of woman, and the impure rites of antiquity testify to the desire felt by women to offer to their deities that which they held to be most precious, their virginity.

Thus the two most atrocious and revolting institutions of ancient paganism are due to a pious and holy motive. It was in Canaan that both were practised in their most revolting forms.

The altar of Moloch reeked with blood. Children were sacrificed and burned in the fire to him, whilst trumpets and flutes drowned their screams, and the mothers looked on, and were bound to restrain their tears.¹ According to Porphyry, the Phœnicians offered in times of war and drouth the fairest of their children. The books of Sanchoniathon and Byblian Philo are full of accounts of such sacrifices. In Byblos, boys were immolated to Adonis; and on the founding of a city or colony, a sacrifice of a vast number of children was solemnized, in the hopes of thereby averting misfortune from the new settlement. Eusebius says that yearly the Phœnicians sacrificed their dearest, and even their only children to Saturn.² The bones of the victims were preserved in the temple of Moloch, in a golden ark, which was carried by the Phœnicians with them to war.³

Mylitta was worshipped by the sacrifice of chastity. Every woman was required once in her life to prostitute herself to the honour of this goddess. According to Herodotus, the way to her temple was often so crowded with women, seated close together waiting till their turn came, that there was scarce room for a man to pick his way among them to select a partner; and the ugly ones had often to wait thus for years.⁴

The Carthaginians perpetuated these cruel and revolting rites. In times of adversity they sought to avert evil from themselves, by offering men and children in numbers on the altars. During a battle with King Gelo of Syracuse, the general Hamilcar sacrificed innumerable human victims.

¹ Plutarch : *De Superst.* c. 13.

² *De Laud. Constant.* c. 13 ; *Præpar. Evang.* i. 10 ; iv. 16.

³ Arrian : *Exped. Alexand.* ii. 24 ; *Amos* v. 26.

⁴ Herod. i. 199 ; Lucian : *De Syria Dea*, c. 6.

from dawn till sunset, but when the day turned against him, he cast himself into the flames.¹

At the siege of Agrigentum the generals offered a boy to Kronos, and cast a number of beasts into the sea, as an oblation to Poseidon. But when King Agathocles himself appeared before the walls of Carthage, the besieged offered two hundred boys of the best families in the city.² Every year, moreover, by lot victims were chosen for the flames. The Carthaginians had a brazen statue of Kronos, which stood with open hands above the flames, and was itself heated red-hot; the wretched children were then laid in the hands of the statue, from which they rolled in their agony into the flames beneath. To supply the altars, the Carthaginians bought children, to use Plutarch's words, like lambs and young birds, and slaves and prisoners were allotted to the same fate. The greater readiness shown by the victims to enter the flames, the better the augury. In vain did Darius Hydaspes, and after him the Greeks and Romans, endeavour to abolish these cruel rites. The destruction of Carthage did not terminate them, and the horrors of the sacrifice of children continued till the consulate of Tiberius.

The same hideous sacrifices prevailed also among the Arabs before the time of Mahommed. Black-vested priests were wont every seventh day to sacrifice children on the sacred stone in the Kaaba, to Hobal the Creator. As among the Carthaginians so with the Arabs, sucking children were the favourite oblation, but also young virgins were married to the god by a death in flames.³

In Egypt, a virgin was yearly cast into the Nile to be

¹ Herod. vii. 167.

² Diod. Sicul. xiii. 86; xx. 14, 65.

³ Ghillany: *Die Menschenopfer d. Hebräer*. Chwolsohn: *Die Ssabier u. der Ssabismus*.

the bride of the river, and the custom remained in force till the conquest of Egypt by Omar, when he forbade it.¹ In earlier times, according to Manetho's account, three men were sacrificed daily in the temple of Heliopolis. But King Amasis ordered three wax tapers to be burned daily instead.² In later times, however, men with red hair were offered to Typhon in times of drought.

In Meroe, says Diodorus, the priests had supreme authority, and when they sent to announce to the king that the gods desired his death, he at once yielded himself up as a sacrifice to atone for the sins of his people; till Ergamenes, in the reign of Ptolemy II., had the courage to resist the command and overthrow the priestly despotism.³

The Persians were wont to sacrifice human beings by burying them alive.⁴ Amestris, the wife of Xerxes, offered fourteen Persian youths of noble birth, on one occasion, as a thank-offering. Plutarch says that the number was twelve; but corroborates the fact.⁵ The Sepharvite colony in Samaria "burnt their children in fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim."⁶ In Laodicea, a young maiden was offered once a year to Astarte.⁷ In Crete, the horrible rites of the Phœnicians were practised. The legend of the Minotaur, and the seven youths and seven maidens sent every nine years to him, is a reminiscence of the human sacrifices which there prevailed. In the year B.C. 596, the Cretan priest Epimenides arrived at Athens to demand a man for sacrifice, and the youth Cratinos offered himself.⁸ At Salamis, in Cyprus, the same

¹ Hyde : *Relig. Vet. Pers.* i. 30. Jablonsky : *De Dieb. Ægypt.* § 15, 17

² Porphy. *Abstin.* ii. 55.

³ Diod. *Sicul.* iii. 6.

⁴ Herod. vii. 114, 180.

⁵ Plut. *de Superst.* 13

⁶ 2 Kings xvii. 31.

⁷ Porphy. ii. 56.

⁸ Athenæos, xiii. 78; Diog. Laert. i. 110.

cruel rites prevailed, instituted, according to tradition, by Teucer. Every year, in the month of March, a man was slain on the altar of the god Zeus, till Hadrian forbade it. The ceremony consisted in the victim being led thrice round the altar, after which he was run through with a spear, and his body was consumed in a pyre.¹ In the island of Rhodes, similar bloody sacrifices were perpetrated. Whenever ill luck threatened, the brazen bull of Zeus Atabyrios bellowed on the mountain Tabor,² victims were placed in the bull, fires lighted under it, and they were consumed in the red-hot paunch. Human sacrifices were customary also in Lemnos, Tenedos, and Andros. A popular Arcadian legend related that Lycaon was changed into a wolf because he offered a child to Zeus. It is easy to see in this tale, the reminiscence of the ancient human sacrifices offered to the god, but afterwards discontinued. For long, the pain of death was the punishment of any one who crossed the threshold of this divinity, doubtless because originally the priests sacrificed the first stranger who approached. In Laconia, Lycurgus abolished the sacrifice of men offered to Artemis Orthia, and established instead the scourging of children at her altar.³ Cecrops is said to have abolished these barbarous rites in Attica. But Leos sacrificed his two daughters, when the oracle declared that such an act was necessary for the welfare of the state.⁴

In the Peloponnesus, these sacrifices continued with greater or less frequency up to the time of the Messenian war.⁵ In consequence of the sacrilege of Menalippos and Comætho, who had polluted the temple by their amours,

¹ Lactant. Inst. i. 21.

² Porphy. ii. 54 ; Schol. Pind. Ol. vii. 160.

³ Pausan. iii. 16 ; Porphy. ii. 57.

⁴ Pausan. i. 5 ; Suidas, v. Λεωκόριον ; Diod. Sic. xv. 17.

⁵ Ælian. Hist. Var. xii. 28.

the Pythoness ordered the guilty pair to be sacrificed, and a boy and a girl to be immolated yearly in expiation of the crime.¹ Before going to war the Greeks offered a human victim to ensure victory;² and it was in accordance with this ancient custom that Themistocles sacrificed three Persian prisoners to Dionysos Omestes.³ In Bœotia, a drunken man having killed a priest of Dionysos Ægobolos, and an epidemic having broken out immediately after, the calamity was regarded as a judgment on the people for the sacrilege, and the oracle of Delphi ordered them to expiate it by sacrificing a young and beautiful boy.⁴

In Sicily as in Rhodes, a brazen bull consumed the victims dedicated to Kronos.

Among the Romans, the tradition of human sacrifices, which were common among the ancient Latins, did not die out. "Who does not know," asks Eusebius, "that to this day, in the great city a man is sacrificed to Jupiter Latiaris?"⁵ Diodorus relates, that when the temple of the Goddess of War was destroyed in Rome, basins full of human flesh were found.⁶ Marcus and Junius Brutus ordered that fights of gladiators should take the place of human sacrifices, and B.C. 97 the Senate forbade the sacrifice of men;⁷ but old customs are not easily broken through, and Augustus, Tiberius,⁸ and Hadrian⁹ were obliged to renew

¹ Pausan. vii. 19.

² Porphyry. ii. 56.

³ Plutarch : Themist. 13.

⁴ Pausan. ix. 8.

⁵ Euseb. *Præpar. Evang.* iv. 18 ; Tertull. *Apol.* 9 : "In illa religiosissima urbe Æneadarum piorum est Jupiter quidam, quem ludis suis humano proluunt sanguine." Lactant. i. 21 : "Latiaris Jupiter etiam nunc sanguine colitur humano." Minut. Felix Octav. : "Hodie a Romanis Jupiter Latiaris homicidio colitur, et quod Saturni filio dignum est, mali et noxii hominis sanguine saginatur."

⁶ Diod. Sicul. xlii. 26.

⁷ Plin. xxxi. 1.

⁸ Sueton. Claud. 25.

⁹ Lactant. *Inst.* i. 21.

the edict. At Cæsar's triumphal feast two victims were consigned by the hand of the priest to the flames in honour of Mars;¹ and Octavian himself, after his victory over Antony, sacrificed as many as three hundred—or according to Dio four hundred—human victims on the altar of Divus Julius, as atonement for the souls of the dead;² and Sextus Pompeius cast men into the sea as an offering to Neptune.³

The Gauls and Britons also offered human beings. The nobles of Gaul in sickness or in danger vowed such sacrifices, hoping to substitute another life for their own.⁴ Not long before Cæsar's arrival in Gaul, clients and slaves were burned along with the body of a dead chieftain. The Druids believed that the blood of criminals was pleasing to the gods, and with it they smeared their statues and the trees sacred to them.⁵

The Germans, says Tacitus, offered to their chief god, Mercury (Woden) human sacrifices;⁶ after a battle, they sacrificed their prisoners. The Hermanduri and Chatti, after a fight, set to work and slaughtered those they had captured, in hopes of attracting to their sides the favour of their gods;⁷ and King Radajais vowed a wholesale immolation of Christians if he gained a battle.⁸

The Lithuanians did the same. "They adore dragons and birds," says Adam of Bremen, "to which they sacrifice men, whom they buy for the purpose of merchants, well tried, and without bodily blemish."⁹ The Herulii raised pyres, and placed old and sick persons on them, then stabbed them and consumed their bodies in the flames.¹⁰

¹ Dio Cass. xl. 24; xliii. 24.

² Strabo: Oct. 15; Dio, xlviii. 14.

³ Dio, xlviii. 48.

⁴ Cæsar, *Bel. Gal.* vi. 13.

⁵ Lucan, *Phars.* i. iii. 399.

⁶ Tacit. *Germ.* 9.

Tacit. *Ann.* xiii. 57; i. 61.

Jordanes, 5. Sidon. *Apolin.* viii. 6.

Epist. Bonifacii, xxv.

⁸ Isidor. *Chron. Goth.* A.D. 446.

⁹ Adami Brem., *De Situ Daniæ.*

¹⁰ Procop. *Bel. Goth.* ii. 14.

The same custom was well known among the Scandinavians. The victims were generally, but not always, criminals, and the sacrificial stone stood near the doom-ring. On it the back of the victim was broken,¹ or else he was drowned in a river or in a swamp.² Suicide was regarded as a sacrifice, and a warrior might call all those he had slain in battle offerings to Odin. The Swedish king On sacrificed nine of his sons one after the other, to obtain a prolongation of his life;³ and the Swedes offered their king Donaldi, and afterwards King Olaf Tretelgja, to obtain good harvests.⁴ Earl Hako sacrificed his own son to Thorgerda Hörgabrudr.⁵ The Gothlanders were wont to immolate their sons and daughters.⁶ A mother hung her son as an oblation to Odin, whose assistance she desired to brew good beer, in order that she might win the heart of her husband, King Alfrekr.⁷ When Christianity was about to be introduced into Iceland the heathen party determined to sacrifice several men, in hopes of thereby obtaining the victory over the Christian party.⁸

In America, human sacrifices were as common as in Asia and Europe. Among the Redskins, the torture of prisoners was not merely an exhibition of malice and cruelty, but was a sacrificial act intended to appease the souls of the dead, or to gratify the war or sun god. Thus, among the Iroquois, when an enemy was tortured at the stake, the savage executioners leaped around him crying, "To thee, Areskouï, great spirit, we slay this victim, that thou mayest eat his flesh and be moved thereby to give us

¹ Eyrbyggja Saga, c. 10 ; Landnama, S. ii. c. 12.

² Kjalnesinga Saga, c. 2 ; Adam Brem. p. 379.

³ Ynglinga S. c. 29.

⁴ Ibid. cc. 18, 47.

⁵ Jomsvikinga S. c. 44.

⁶ Gothlands L. Hist. i.

⁷ Alfs Saga, c. 1.

⁸ Kristni S. c. 11.

henceforth luck and victory over our foes!"¹ The dead were also invoked, and bidden join in drinking the blood of the sufferer, and eating the flesh of the dead.² The Onondagas, the Hurons, and the Algonquins performed the same rites with the same intentions. The Caribs sacrificed children to the sun and moon, and baptized the first-born in the blood of his father.³ In the east of South America the captives made in war were slaughtered as an offering to the gods.⁴ In Peru, when an Inca was ill, his son was sacrificed to the sun-god, in hopes that the child would be accepted in place of his father. At the feast of the Sun called Raymi, a little child or a beautiful maiden was immolated.⁵ At the beginning of the reign of an Inca, numbers of children between the years of four and ten were sacrificed: they were drowned and then buried.⁶ Children were slain on the altars of several gods every month in the year, and the faces of the images were smeared with their blood.

But it was chiefly among the Aztecs that these revolting rites assumed their greatest development. In the *Popol Vuh* is an account of the origin of human sacrifices among the Quiches. The natives of Central America were unacquainted with the means of producing fire, and when the Quiche race came among them they greatly desired its acquisition. Tohil was the fire-god of the Quiches.

"Then arrived the tribes, perishing with cold; for there had been a great frost and a frozen rain, a piercing chill. And all the tribes were gathered shivering and quaking

¹ Müller: *Americ. Urreligionen*, p. 142.

² Charlevoix: *Journal*, p. 247. Schoolcraft, *Algie Researches*, vol. i. p. 203.

³ Müller, p. 212.

⁴ Correal in Picard.: *Cérémonies*, p. 181.

⁵ Prescott: *Conquest of Peru*, i. 80.

⁶ Acosta, in Müller, p. 378.

with cold, when they came before (the leaders of the Quiches) Balam-Quitze, Balam-Agab, Mahucutah, and Iqui-Balam. Great was their misery. 'Will you not compassionate us?' they asked. 'We only entreat a little fire. Were we not all one, and with one country, when we were first created? Have pity on us!'

"What will you give us that we should compassionate you?' was the answer made to them.

"We will give silver,' answered the tribes.

"We will not have silver,' said Balam-Quitze and Balam-Agab.

"What do you require, then?' they asked.

"It was answered, 'We will inquire of Tohil.'

"The tribes replied, 'It is well.'

"What shall the tribes give thee, O Tohil, in return for a little fire?' asked then Balam-Quitze, Balam-Agab, Mahucutah, and Iqui-Balam.

"Let them be united to me betwixt the armpit and belt. Will their hearts agree to embrace me, Tohil? If not, let them have no fire.'

"Thus spake the god Tohil: and he added, 'Tell them that this shall be little by little, and that it will be the union of themselves between the armpit and belt.'

"It is well,' they said, on hearing the words of Tohil. 'We will embrace him.'

"Thus they were taken in the snare, for when they yielded from the armpit to the belt, it was for cutting open of the breast that Tohil spake, when the tribes are sacrificed before his face, and when they tear the hearts out of the breast. This rite was not till then practised, till death was enigmatically proposed by Tohil in horror and majesty by the hand of Balam-Quitze, Balam-Agab, Mahucutah, and Iqui-Balam."¹

¹ *Popol Vuh*, pp. 223-227; Paris, 1861.

The mode of sacrifice was the slicing open of the breast and the tearing out of the still palpitating heart, which was then put to the lips of the god, after which the priests devoured the victim. At the dedication of a single Mexican temple 70,000 men were slaughtered, and from the years 1486 to 1521, yearly, at the great sacrificial feasts, from four to five thousand victims were immolated, so that the huge pyramid of skulls which stood where the present Mexican cathedral has been erected was built up of 136,000 heads. Sometimes as many as 20,000 were butchered in one day, and the steps of the temple streamed with blood. On the feast of the god Thalok a boy and a girl were drowned.¹

Horrors scarcely inferior are perpetrated in our own day in Dahomi. The following extract, from Commander Perry of H.M.S. *Griffin*, went the round of the papers in September 1862:—

“*July 10.*—The ground shook violently—evidently, from the date, the effect of the earthquake felt at Accra. Mr. Euschart was at once brought to the market-place, where he found the king again seated on the raised platform, surrounded by Amazons. The king told him that the ground shaking was his father’s spirit, complaining that ‘customs were not made proper.’ Three Ishagga chiefs were then brought before the king, and told they were to go and tell his father that ‘customs should be better than ever.’ Each chief was then given a bottle of rum and a head of cowries, and then decapitated. Twenty-four men were then brought out, bound in baskets, with their heads

¹ Prescott: *Conquest of Mexico*, i. Stephens: *Central America*, ii. 184. Müller: *Americ. Urrelig.* pp. 439-670. Sepp: *Das Heidenthum*, ii. 143-145.

just showing out, and placed on the platform in front of the king. They were then thrown down to the people, who were dancing, singing, and yelling below. As each man was thrown down, he was seized and beheaded, the heads being piled in one heap and the bodies in another. Every man who caught a victim and cut off the head received one head of cowries (about 2s.). After all were killed Mr. Euschart was conducted home.

"*July 11.*—Taken to another part of the town, where exactly similar horrors were being perpetrated.

"*July 12.*—All the platforms were taken down, and the programme appeared to be firing guns, singing, and dancing all day; there were no more public sacrifices for ten days, but it is supposed many took place during the nights.

"*July 22.*—Taken to see the 'grand customs' at the palace of the late king, at the gate of which two platforms had been erected; on each platform sixteen men and four horses were placed; inside the house was placed another platform, on which were placed sixteen women, four horses, and one alligator. The men and women were all Sierra Leone people captured at Ishagga, and were dressed in European clothes, each group of sixteen men seated or rather bound in chairs placed round a table, on which glasses of rum were placed for each. The king then ascended the platform, where he adored the Dahomian fetish, and seemed to make obeisance to the prisoners, whose right arms were then loosed to enable them to take up the glass to drink the king's health. After the King's health had been drunk, the effects of the late King were paraded, and worshipped by the people as they passed. A grand review of the troops then commenced, and as each marched past, the King harangued them, and promised the sack of Abbeokuta in November. After the review was

over the prisoners were beheaded, their heads being hacked off with blunt knives ; at the same time the horses and alligator were despatched, particular care being taken that their blood should mingle with that of the human prisoners.

“When all was finished Mr Euschart was permitted to leave Abomey, which, it is needless to say, he immediately did, having received the magnificent *viatica* of eight heads of cowries (16s.), one piece of country cloth, and two flasks of rum.

“T. L. PERRY, Commander.

“To the Governor of Lagos.”

It is very persistently asserted by Christian advocates, that the prevalence of sacrifice had its origin in a general consciousness of sin, and of a need of expiation through shedding of blood. This assertion is rash, and cannot be substantiated. As I have shown, the first idea of sacrifice arises naturally from men's experience in their dealings with one another. “Presents win the gods as well as kings” was an old Greek proverb. And Lucian says: “The gods do nothing gratis: the good things they make over to man are wares for which they expect a solid equivalent in return; health has to be purchased for a bull-calf, wealth for four oxen, a kingdom for a hecatomb. And there are things to be had in their market, it seems, for a fowl, for a garland of flowers, and for only a couple of grains of incense, too.”¹

But when the idea of a moral Governor of the universe dawned on men's minds, then the notion of sin and of responsibility to Him followed as a corollary. Among the Greeks, who generally had no such idea, the sacrifices were

¹ Luc. de Sacrific. c. 2.

gifts made to the gods rather than expiations. To acknowledge in practice the supremacy and power of the divinity, to present it with a pledge, as it were, of homage and subjection to its will, to return thanks for gifts received or protection accorded,—this was the primitive signification of sacrifice. Thus there arose a graduated scale of offerings, from the most insignificant and worthless up to the most costly of man's possessions—life. As civilization advanced, and with it a care for life, bulls and goats were substituted for human victims, or, as in Rome, the victims were armed and allowed to defend themselves.

Among the Jews it was otherwise. They believed in one God, perfectly holy and just, and they were compelled to view themselves in relation to an ideal of perfection. This convinced them of their shortcomings. The moral law came to them by direct revelation, and a transgression of one of its precepts placed them in a state of disobedience and disfavour. Reconciliation and atonement became, therefore, a necessary part of a religion which held a holy and just God. Whenever a people or an individual realizes the existence of a present, omniscient, holy God, the consciousness of having lived without the recognition of His presence, and without regard to His law, agitates the soul, and impresses it with a conviction of sin; and the sin seems dreadful and heinous just in proportion as God is supposed to partake of the character of an earthly sovereign, obliged, in order to maintain His government, to inflict punishment on transgressors, or else as being infinitely tender, loving, and merciful.

It matters little whether the idea of sin be derived from a directly or indirectly revealed law; when once it is realized, the craving for expiation follows.

The surest criterion of what is the law of God, if we

suppose that there is a God, or of Nature, if we suppose that Nature acts according to law, is the tendency of an action to promote the most perfect happiness. We find all men agree to consider murder, theft, adultery, and falsehood to be violations of the Divine law, and they rush to the conclusion that God has implanted in them a conscience or instinct to discern at once evil from good: whereas the fact is, that the consequences of these acts are so direct and incisive that the suffering their perpetration causes, forms the conscience. But there are hosts of other acts the advantages or disadvantages flowing from which are recondite, and demanding careful analysis and weighing of the results before their character can be determined. Drunkenness gives immediate pleasure to the drinker, but the results, in impaired health and mental power, fearfully counterbalance the pleasure, and declare the action to be a violation of the law of our nature. Now, when any sin has been committed, punishment is sure to follow. We see this obviously in those sins which are more directly connected with our physical condition; we see it also in those which are incompatible with the interests of society, but it is no less so with regard to those of a more subtle character, where the consequences are not immediately felt. In all of them there is the deprivation of the happiness which the doing of that which is right and proper brings.

Thus it is a law which men cannot possibly fail to discern, that transgression of the law, physical, moral, or mental, produces suffering as its consequence.

Seeing this, men associate suffering with the expiation of sin, and, in atoning for their transgressions, they mark their contrition by the suffering which they inflict vicariously on the victim. They argue thus: "I have broken a law of God. God exacts pain as a consequence of such

a breach. I will therefore slay this lamb, and its sufferings shall make the atonement requisite." Nor is this mode of reasoning as irrational as it appears at first sight, for it is also a deduction from an experimental observance of the working out of Nature's laws. For the suffering ensuing upon a sin very generally does not fall on the sinner, but on some one else. A father undermines his constitution with drink, and the children are sickly. A youth runs into debt, and his parents have to stint themselves to save him from prison. Through a general's fault an army is routed, and the soldiers perish; through a pointsman's carelessness, a train-load of excursionsists are cut to pieces; through a mother's neglect her child falls into the river, and is drowned; through the little girl's forgetfulness the canary is tortured, and dies of thirst. So thoroughly recognised is this principle among savage races, that when a crime has been committed by a member of a tribe, all the other members make atonement, and the criminal escapes scot-free.

It is through suffering that every good society possesses has been won. Suffering is not only the expiation of wrong, but it is also its remedy; a sacrifice purifies the good and purges away the bad.

*"Tu fais l'homme, O Douleur !
Qui ne te connaît point, ne sait rien d'ici bas,
Il foule mollement la terre, il n'y vit pas.
Comme sur un image, il flotte sur la vie."*

The sacrifice of all excess of life is the science of life; the sacrifice of the present caprice and pleasure ensures future prosperity; the sacrifice of the straggling tendrils of sentiment strengthens the vital stem. Far from destroying the distinct forces of life, sacrifice gathers them up, unites, and maintains them.

It is this which is the moral of that greatest of tragedies—the Prometheus Bound of Æschylus. The Titan has saved humanity when Zeus had decreed its destruction; he has brought wisdom, art, industry into the world. Thus he is the great benefactor of man, and this love of his for the mortal is the cause of his unutterable sufferings.

“ I have adventured—I still have saved man’s race,
Uncrushed, ungulfed in Hades’ endless night.
This why he bows me with such bitter pain;
Abetting man, on me has suffering fallen.”

He is the type of humanity, achieving great things, learning experience, acquiring wisdom, conquering the earth, but always through suffering and by sacrifice.

CHAPTER XIX

SACRAMENTS

The belief in a Divine Person necessitates prayer and sacraments—Man not perfect without feeling—the religious passion—its expression prayer—its satisfaction sacrament—Prayer a liberation of force—a necessity of man's nature—Sacraments—The object for which they are designed—Purificatory sacraments—Baptisms—Sprinklings with water and blood—Baptisms of fire—Confession—Communion—by sexual union—by dreams—by partaking of a sacrifice—Omophagic rites—Soma rites—Cannibalism—Theory of sacramental communion.

PANTHEISM, when it represents God as absolute, divested of attributes, and without personality, does not require prayer and sacraments to complete its scheme. But it is not so with theism. Theism represents God as an immaterial person, delivered from all limitations and all conditions which disagree with His nature. In Him there is neither beginning, nor middle, nor end; He is at once all that He is throughout eternity, all that He ought to be, and all that He can be. He is the unity of existence and of essence, of idea and of reality, of will and of action. The personality of man demands the personality of God. Pure essence, bare existence, absolute idea, do not satisfy man; for these qualities are too abstract to meet the wants of his strong individual nature. The more personality there is in a man, the more desire he feels to find

a personal God. The dry thinker, the philosopher, the student of abstract sciences, who feel satisfaction in the contemplation of the relations of things, in divesting every object of its attributes, and in penetrating to the ultimate essence,—such men have no natural impulsion towards a personal or objective God, and they require the Supreme Being to be the ultimate substance, or the law of harmonious development. An abstract God is the object of intellectual theosophy, but a personal God is the object to which sentimental religion gravitates.

If man is perfect as an intellectual being without feelings, well and good; an impersonal God is all that is wanted to satisfy his intellectual requirements. But man is not perfect without sentiment, and that is abundantly evident from a contemplation of the great achievements of the race, which are due, every whit, as much to feeling as to thought. A man without feeling is not good for much as a man. He may make an admirable machine, or motive force to set machinery in motion, but he will leave the great tract of beauty and goodness waste. It is the power of feeling as well as thought which gives the orator force to sway, control, and elevate the mass of men. Mere thought convinces; feeling persuades. Thought sees beauty; emotion takes it to heart and cherishes it. Every great poet has been distinguished as much for power of feeling as for depth of thought. It is the secret of the painter's art. Half the odds between Raphael and a Chinese painter is in the power of feeling, says Theodore Parker. "It is equally necessary for the common life of men. Thought and feeling both must go to housekeeping, or it is a sad family. The spiritual part of human beauty, man's or woman's, is one-fifth an expression of thought, four-fifths of feeling. The philosopher's face is not handsome. Socrates, John

Locke, John Calvin, and Emanuel Kant, are good enough types of mere thought, hard thought, without emotion. It is the power of feeling which makes the wise father attractive, and the strong-minded mother dear. This joins relatives nearer than kindred blood; it makes friendship actual; it is the great element in philanthropy; it is the fountain whence flows forth all that we call piety. Philanthropy is feeling for men, friendship is feeling with men, and piety is feeling with God.”¹

This feeling for God, whose personality is postulated by the desire, is a veritable passion, and it demands intercommunion between the soul and God, a means of expressing its desire to God, and a means of union with God. This passion is as pronounced in man as is the sexual passion, or the passion to know. This passion must have expression and satisfaction. It finds its expression in prayer, and its satisfaction in sacraments. Prayer and sacrament are the two poles of the religious battery, whose union completes the circle. Sacrament without emotional action is formalism. Emotional action without sacrament is mysticism. Prayer is the imperative of love. The most superficial view of prayer is to regard it as an expression of the sentiment of dependence. It expresses this indeed, but more than this: it testifies the confidence of a heart above all disquieting doubt—a faith in the objective reality of that to which the desires tend, and in the sensibility, sympathy, and power of that Personality, so like man, and yet so much above man, which the passion of the soul insists upon addressing. Human nature is conscious of this craving, whether it believe in a God or not; it exhibits itself in restlessness, in the quest after novelty, in the desire of action. The man whose ideas are limited to the world,

¹ Parker: *Lessons from the World of Matter*, p. 110; Lond. 1865.

and who regards all phenomena as linked together into one chain of successive causes which cannot be broken through,—who holds that a desire can only be expended by muscular or mental action,—does not pray ; he works with hands or head, and transforms his desires into objects practical and material. He limits his being by the idea of the world, of which he knows that he is a member, and his desires by the idea of necessity. The man who prays, on the contrary, withdraws his mind from the world of phenomena, and projects it into that of ideas. He affirms the infinity and absolute value of the object to which he conceives his desire stream. Prayer is the faith of the heart in the identity of the ideal with the real, the certainty that the power of the heart is greater than the power of nature, that the wants of the heart are an imperious necessity, the destiny of the world.

Prayer is a liberation of force. When the emotions are excited, rapid combustion of nervous tissue ensues, and the desire that inevitably follows to do something is the signal that an amount of power has been generated, and equilibrium is disturbed. In times of strong emotion, we instinctively seek by strong muscular action to relieve ourselves. Such relief is a discharge of force. The passion of anger is relieved by revenge ; the passion of avarice, by hard labour ; the passion of suffering, by prayer. When we are tortured with a passion, and the attainment of its object is not permitted us, we seek to divert our attention ; the man in love with the woman who refuses him, travels, climbs the Matter-horn, or does some other desperate act—not, as he supposes, to forget the object of his affections, but to expend those affections on a thousand other objects. The poet fired with an idea seizes his pen,

the excited musician expends his energy on the piano keys, and the artist plasters it into his canvas. Take from the poet his pen, from the musician his instrument, and from the painter his brush, and their feelings are pent up and become suffering. Prayer is a means of relieving this torture, and restoring the balance, without which provision of nature man would be dependent on the materials corresponding to his passion, and without which his mind would consume itself. The disappointed lover cannot always afford to make the ascent of the Matter-horn; but prayer will produce the same pacifying effect without costing him a penny.

The personal God, which is the object demanded by the heart of man, must be a God of love, from the simple fact that it is the heart which appeals to Him. In his sufferings, man does not turn to Nature, or only does so to meet with disappointment. We instinctively feel that those addresses made by impassioned writers of the last two centuries to sun and moon, flowers and trees, rocks and streams, are unreal. Equally hollow is any appeal to physical forces and hypostatized laws. Nature does not hear the complaints of man—it is insensible to his sufferings; and man instinctively turns from her, from visible objects in general, and he seeks in a personal God for one conscious, sympathetic, compassionate, who can not only hear him, but can console him. In prayer, he confesses to God as to a Being who knows him and who loves him. He expresses to Him his most intimate desires, lays bare before Him his most secret thoughts, with a confidence, a certainty of being heard.

Prayer is a necessity of man's nature—that is, of the nature which is not mere intellect, but is sentiment as well. There are other modes of relieving the excited

feelings when their natural expression is arrested, but none so efficacious. The passionate man, without religion, forbidden to revenge himself, disappointed in love, suffering through failure, takes the law into his own hands, commits a fraud, or shoots himself. He must do something, so he does what is undesirable. A religious man, on the other hand, prays, and finds peace. A boiler without a safety-valve will burst. Prayer is the safety-valve to the feelings in ebullition.

We are as justified in concluding, from the presence of the instinct of prayer, that the personal Deity whom we address has a real existence, as the infant is, when feeling the passion of hunger, in concluding that it has a mother at whose breast it can find relief; or as a little bird, when pecking open its shell, is justified in concluding that there is a world outside in which it can live and breathe, and agitate its wings. We have absolutely no instance in the whole world of animated nature of an instinctive *penchant* without a corresponding object to which it tends, and which can satisfy that *penchant*. The religious passion, the straining of the desire towards God, is a fact—as certain a fact as human love, the straining of one heart towards another. And just as in the human affections a response is desired with an intensity which can be satisfied with nothing short of it, so in the religious passion the heart craves for a reciprocal action on the part of God, and such action it finds in the sacraments. Prayer is the afferent fibre and sacrament the efferent fibre of the religious system. Prayer without sacrament to supply the waste produces a diseased sentimental state—mysticism—in which the feelings are continually giving out, but never receiving, till the idea of God becomes indistinguishable from the idea of self. Whether there be any objective

value in sacraments is another matter, but the belief that there is preserves the distinction between the subject and the object. The soul that is constantly giving, and never receiving, conceives itself to be the only spiritual activity. Thus Scheffler, the disciple of Böhme, could write such aphorisms as these:—

“Not for a moment God could without me endure,
But if I cease to be, then He to cease is sure.

I am as great as God—He is as small as I ;
He cannot o’er me be, nor I beneath Him lie.”¹

Sacramental acts form as conspicuous a portion of the ceremonial of all religions as does prayer. The reason of this is seen at once when we grasp the rationale of religious acts. Prayer is the approach of man to God, and sacrament is the going forth of God to meet man. The two ideas are co-ordinate ; one is the complement of the other. According to the syntax of all religions, the sacramental matter is a mere vehicle for divine operation. God could, by virtue of His almighty power, attach the same effects to any other matter ; but He does not do so, He accommodates Himself to the natural quality, He chooses a material corresponding to the desired effect.

The object aimed at in sacraments is the union of man with God : this union may be effected in one of two ways. 1. Man’s nature may be sublimated, purified, and merged in God. 2. God’s nature may be infused into man. On these two ideas two systems of sacramental ceremonial are

¹ “Ich weiss dass ohne Mich Gott nicht ein Nun kann leben
Werd Ich zu nicht, Er muss von Noth ein Geist aufgeben.

Ich bin so gross als Gott, Er ist als Ich so klein
Er kann nicht über Mich—Ich unter Ihn nicht sein.”

based; which I shall distinguish by their equivalents in the Christian Church—Baptism and Communion.

I. Baptismal ceremonial includes all purifications. The idea that man is held back from perfect union with God by his imperfection, uncleanness, sin, is widely diffused, and manifests its existence by water, blood, and fire baptisms; by mutilation of the body and maceration of the flesh. Asceticism has been already dealt with, and we will only here consider ceremonial acts of purification.

Among the Greeks, the mysteries of Cotys commenced with a purification, a sort of baptism, and the priests of the Thracian goddess derived from this their title of *Βάπται*.¹

But Apollo, from a supposed derivation of his name from *ἀπολούω*, to purify, was the special god of expiation by baptismal acts. In Thessaly was yearly celebrated a great festival of cleansing. A work, bearing the name of "Musæus," was a complete ritual of purifications. It distinguished the ceremonies into two orders, *τελεταί* and *καθαρμοί*. The latter were purifications and expiations accomplished by special sacrifices. The former resembled the purifications performed in the mysteries. The usual mode of purification was dipping in water, or it was performed by aspersion. The baptism of immersion was called *λούτρον*, the other *περίρρανσις*.² These sacraments were held to have virtue independent of the dispositions of the candidate, an opinion which called forth the sneer of Diogenes when he saw some one undergoing baptism by aspersion: "Poor wretch! do you not see that, since these sprinklings cannot repair your grammatical errors they cannot repair either the faults of your life?"³ Lustral

¹ Suidas, sub voc.; Juven. Satir. ii. 92.

² Plat. Cratyl. 47; Theophr. Hist. Plant. ix. 12.

³ Diog. Laert. lib. vi

water was placed at the temple doors, with which the profane were purified by the priests.¹ Usually, before entering a temple, the hands and feet were washed. At Athens, when the proedrai had opened the assembly the peristiarchoi offered a sacrifice, and then with the blood of the victim sprinkled the seats. The herald then took the place of the peristiarchoi and continued the lustration by burning incense; for fumigations (*περιθειώσεις*) constituted another means of purification.² In default of water, sand was used, and salt, which, as a symbol of incorruption, was regarded as possessed of purificatory virtue. Every impure act, murder, the touch of a corpse, illegitimate commerce, even the conjugal act, demanded purification.

In like manner baptism was practised by the Romans, and Juvenal satirizes those who washed away their sins by dipping the head thrice, in the morning, into the waters of the Tiber.³ On the feast of Pales, the goddess of flocks, the shepherds purified themselves by washing their hands thrice in new-fallen dew;⁴ or a lustration was effected by aspersion with consecrated water shaken from a branch of laurel or olive; in reference to which rite Propertius prays, much as once did David, "Spargite me lymphis."⁵

In India, the waters of the Ganges have a purifying effect. New-born children are bathed in it, the sick are sprinkled with it, the dead are plunged in it. Drinking of that water washes away sin, therefore the Indians take it with them to their houses, and use it in the ceremonies of their temples. In Egypt it was held that the dead were

¹ Hippocr. *De Morbo Sacro*, 1; Eurip. *Herc. Fur.* 928, 930; Plin. *Hist. Nat.* xv. 30.

² Lassaulx, *Die Sühnopfer d. Griechen*; Würtzburg, 1846.

³ Juven. *Satir.* vi. 522.

⁴ Ovid. *Fast.* iv. 778.

⁵ Propert. *Vel.* vi. 7.

washed from their sins by Osiris, in the land of shades, and on the sarcophagi the departed is often represented kneeling before Osiris, who pours over him water from a pitcher.¹

The ritual of purification with water and urine of cows, and earth, is the most prominent feature in the Zend ceremonial, and fills the major part of the Vendidad.² Among the Jews, every impurity was cleansed by immersion in, or aspersion with, consecrated water,³ and sin was remitted by sprinkling with blood.⁴ Among the Scandinavians, infant baptism was in vogue long before the introduction of Christianity, and the rite accompanied the naming of the child. Before the accomplishment of this rite, the exposition of the babe was lawful, but after the ceremony it became murder.⁵ A baptism in blood seems to have been practised by the Germans and Norsemen in remote antiquity; to this the traditions of the horny Sigfrid, or Sigurd, and Wolddietrich point. Dipping in water, and aspersion with water, or with blood of a victim, was also customary among the Druids, as was also the baptism of fire, perhaps borrowed by them from the Phœnicians. This was that passing through the fire to Moloch alluded to repeatedly in the Jewish Scriptures.

Among the Mexicans, the new-born child was bathed with these words, spoken by the nurse: "Take this water, for the goddess Chalchiuhcueja is thy mother. May this bath cleanse thee of the impurity contracted in thy mother's womb; may it purify thy heart, and procure for thee a good and honourable life. May the unseen God descend on this water, and free thee from all evil and pollution, and

¹ Sepp : *Das Heidenthum*, i. 194.

² Avesta, ed. Spiegel, *Einleitung*, c. 5.

³ Numb. viii. 7; xix. 9, 13-20; xxxi. 23; Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26; Ps. li. 2-7.

⁴ Levit. xvi. 14-19; Numb. xix. 4; Heb. ix. 13, 14.

⁵ Maurer : *Bekehrung d. Norw. Stammes*, ii. 226.

from all ill-luck. Dear child! the gods Ometeuetli and Omekihuatl created thee in heaven, and sent thee on earth, but know that the life on which thou enterest is full of woe. Thou wilt not be able to eat bread without toil, but may God support thee in all the troubles that await thee.”¹ The second baptism of the child took place later, and it was a baptism in fire. A boy was passed four times through a flame. This passing through the fire was customary among the Romans, on their return from a funeral, in order to purify themselves. Theodoret observed the same custom in Syria. Throughout Europe, during the middle ages, the old heathen custom of men leaping through a fire, and of driving cattle betwixt flames, prevailed to such an extent, that it had to be condemned by ecclesiastical councils. In the East Indies, the mother and her newborn child are purified, at the present time, by passing between two fires. “Every purification,” said Servius, “is made either with water, or with fire, or with air. In all sacred rites there are three purifications; for they are purified either with the torch and sulphur, or are washed with water, or are ventilated with air.”² And St. Paul speaks of Israel as having been “baptized in the cloud and in the sea :”³ their last baptism was to be in blood, when Jerusalem was destroyed. So Christ had His baptism of water in Jordan, of fire on Tabor, and of blood on Calvary; and so the Catholic Church teaches that to man are three purifications—by baptism in water, by penance in Christ’s blood, and by fire in purgatory.

The blood-sprinklings and washings in Mexico were a

¹ Clavigero : *Hist. of Mex.* i. 387. Prescott, i. 52. Acosta, v. 27.

² In *Æn.* ii. 384. Cf. Ovid. *Metam.* vii. 261, “Terque senem flamma, ter aqua, ter sulfure lustrat ;” and Juvenal ii. 157.

³ 1 Cor. x. 2.

part of every sacrifice ; the priests, the assistants, the temple, everything was besmeared with gore.

Among the Maori of New Zealand children were baptized by their father, as appears from the legend of Maui : " Then the lad was taken by his father to be baptized, and after the ceremony prayers were offered to make him sacred, and clean from all impurities ; but when it was completed, his father, Makea-tu-tara, felt greatly alarmed, because he remembered that he had, from mistake, hurriedly skipped over part of the prayers of the baptismal service, and of the services to purify Maui ; he knew that the gods would be certain to punish this fault, by causing Maui to die."¹

Another mode of purification is by confession. The idea involved in this act is that the declaration of a crime relieves the conscience of its criminality. In Iceland, and generally among the Teutonic and Scandinavian peoples, a murder ceased to be a crime when the slayer had declared himself guilty of the deed, or had left a weapon, which might be recognised as his, in the wound of the person slain. Among the Peruvians, confession of sin was made to the priests, but the Incas confessed to the sun. After confession, they bathed in running water, saying, " I have made known my sins to the sun ; thou, O river, bear them away to the sea, that they may never rise up again."

Bilboa asserts that there were confessors appointed for each Peruvian province. Among the sins confessed were the giving birth to twins, the death or misdemeanour of a child, for which the parent was considered responsible. Absolution was given by the confessor after splitting a red

¹ Sir George Grey : *Polynesian Mythology*, p. 32 ; 1855. This incident presents a striking analogy to the Achilles, Balder, Sigfrid, and Sigurd myths.

ball with a thorn, if it fell apart into three fragments, or after numbering maize grains in his hand, and ascertaining whether they were odd or even.¹ Something of the same sort existed in Central America, and the prophet Quetzipecocha was usually represented as seated listening to the confession of a kneeling woman.²

In the preliminary ceremonial of the mysteries of the Cabirii at Samothrace, and of Demeter at Eleusis, confession of the sins of a lifetime was made to the mystagogue, or hierophant. Such confession was demanded by the priest of the Samothracian mysteries, before admission to the solemnities, for certain sins were without absolution, and shut out for ever from participation in the sacred rites. Thus Perseus, the last King of Macedon, in vain sought admission, he having slain his own king. Nero was hindered by his own conscience, which reproached him for the murder of his mother; and when the herald bade all the profane and all criminals withdraw, the Emperor retired in shame. The refusal of S. Ambrose to admit the blood-stained Theodosius within the doors of the church was therefore not without parallel in heathen times. Plutarch tells the story of Lysander, who, when initiated into the Samothracian mysteries, was required by the priest to confess his grievous sins, and replied, "To whom? to you, or to God?" and when the priest answered, "To God," "Then I will trouble you to withdraw beyond ear-shot," said the Lacedæmonian.³ A similar story is told of Antalcidas, who, on being asked what his sins were, answered, "God knows them."⁴

¹ Muller : *Amer. Urrelig.* p. 411.

² Sepp : *Das Heidenthum*, p. 396.

³ Plut. *Lacon. Apoth.* Lysand. § 9, p. 914, ed. Wytttenb.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 217.

Among the Jews confession was practised, for it was part of the law.¹ The purpose of its institution was, first, that the priest might be able to judge what sort of sacrifice was required to expiate the sins committed, and, secondly, in order that all the sins of the people might be rehearsed by the high priest over the scape-goat.² Consequently we have numerous instances in the Old Testament of auricular confession.³

II. The idea involved in communion is the reception of something from God. By prayer man asks something; by purification he makes himself meet to approach God; by communion he receives what he desires of God, by union with Him.

The methods adopted by different religions for accomplishing the desired union are numerous. The grossest and most repulsive is by sexual intercourse. The numerous legends and myths representing the union of gods and women, or men and goddesses, are reminiscences of ancient mysteries, the object of which was to effect such an union. At the summit of the Temple of Belus was a chamber, in which was a bed beside a table of gold; the same was to be seen in Egyptian Thebes, says Herodotus, and every night a woman was laid in this bed, to which the god was supposed to descend. The same took place at Patara in Lycia, where a priestess was locked into the temple every night.⁴ Diodorus alludes to the tombs of the concubines of Jupiter Ammon,⁵ and Strabo says that the fairest and noblest ladies were vowed to share his couch.⁶ It is easy to see how the

¹ Numb. v. 5-7; Levit. v. 5.

² Levit. xvi. 21.

³ 2 Sam. xii. 13; Josh. vii. 19; Ezra x. 10-16; Neh. ix. 1-3.

⁴ Herod. i. 181, 182; ii. 54, 56.

⁵ Diod. Sic. i. 47.

⁶ Strabo. xvii. 1.

obscene orgies celebrated during some of the festivals of the gods rose out of this superstition. Prince, head of the Agapemone, as the impersonation of Deity, performed the sexual act with a young girl in the presence of the whole community, professedly in order to make her thereby a partner of the Divine nature.

Another mode of obtaining intercommunion with the deities, allied to that already touched on, was the custom of sleeping in the temples in hope of receiving dreams from the gods. This was called incubation. For this purpose pilgrimages were made to the temples of Esculapius, of Isis, and of Serapis. Those who desired to enter into communication with Serapis in his temple at Canopus, spent the night before his altar, and received revelations from him in dreams. "Those who go to consult in dream the goddess Isis," says Diodorus, "recover perfect health. Many whose cure has been despaired of by physicians have by this means been saved, and others who have long been deprived of sight, or of some other part of the body, by taking refuge, so to speak, in the arms of the goddess, have been restored to the enjoyment of their faculties."¹

At Lebedos, in Lydia, the sick slept in the temple of the god Soteres, who visited them and healed them during sleep. Pausanias tells us that there existed in Laconia a temple dedicated to Ino, where those passed the night who desired to receive revelations from the goddess.² In the Chersonesus, the goddess Hemithæa wrought the same miracles of healing as Isis, and in the same manner.³ In the Charonium of Nyssa the priests themselves held intercommunion with the deity in dreams.⁴ In the temple of

¹ Diod. Sic. i. 25.

² Pausan. x. 32 ; iii. 26.

³ Diod. Sic. v. 58.

⁴ Eustath. Schol. in Dionys. Perieget. v. 1153.

Esculapius, near Tithoræa, a bed was always ready for incubation, practised there, as in all the other sanctuaries of that god.¹

But a more common mode of receiving favours from the gods is through consecrated food and drink. The idea attaching to this act is, that the food and drink have, by consecration, acquired a divine character, and that therefore, through reception of them, the communicant becomes a partaker of the nature of the divinity.

Thus we find in most religions that a sacrifice is accompanied by a communion. Out of the countless instances that might be quoted a few must suffice.

In the Orphic rites, Dionysos Zagreus was the divinity of generation, the personification of the vital power circulating in nature. The myth attaching to this god concealed a mystic meaning only revealed to the initiated. Zagreus, with Zeus and Persephone, made up a triad. Born by the union of these divinities, Zagreus appeared as the first-begotten of the gods, as he whom Zeus had in his eternal purpose decided to engender.² He became supreme divinity, Lord of all, presiding over vegetation and over death, and all the elements belonging to the ancient legend of Dionysos entered into and were shaped to suit the new character given to him. The Orphic myth related that he was one of the Titans, that he was hated by his brethren, who seized him and murdered him. They then cut his body to pieces, and threw it into a cauldron. Pallas Athene saved the heart, which she bore up to Zeus, who, enraged at the act of the brothers, slew them with his thunder-

¹ Maury : *La Magie*, p. 236, &c. ; Paris, 1860. *Hist. des Relig. de la Grèce*, ii. 462.

² Καὶ βουλῇσι Διὸς πρὸς ἀγανὴν Φερσεφόνειαν
Ἀχθελὺς ἐξετράφησ.—Hymn xlv. 6, 7 ; cf. xlv. 6, 7.

bolts, and charged Apollo to collect the scattered members of the martyred Zagreus. This was what the Orphic priests called the passion (παθήματα) of Zagreus, and it is what Onomacritus relates in one of his hymns.¹ The meaning of this myth seems to have been, that the visible world is the slain body of Zagreus; an idea familiar also to the Norsemen, who supposed the mountains to be the bones, the earth the flesh, and the seas the blood of a giant killed by Odin. By lacerating the flesh of earth with plough and spade, it is made to feed and sustain man, and by digging into its bowels he provides himself with metal. Man, then, draws his nourishment, and indeed his life, from a suffering earth. The passion of Zagreus is the warfare of man. The myth was represented in the Omophagic rites, which consisted in the sacrifice of a man, who was dismembered, his flesh torn off and eaten by the assistants, who thought that they were thereby participators in the virtue of the sacrifice of Zagreus. This rending to pieces of a body became a religious act in the Bacchic mysteries. Before the initiated, in the secrecy of the altar, as a species of heathen Mass, a human being, dedicated to God—but, in later days, a beast in his place—was sacrificed, cut up, and divided for sacramental consumption, as a memorial of the Godhead, in the beginning of creation, having offered Himself for the life of the world, so that the unity of the Godhead was infused into the matter of the world, and its fragments exhibited in nature; a memorial of the blood of Dionysos having flowed into the world of matter, so that to it we owe our life and our bodies.²

¹ Pausan. viii. 7.

² Sepp.: Heidenthum, p. 178: cf. Porphyry. de Abstin. iv.; Eurip. Bacchæ, v. 139.

These bloody Omophagic feasts were celebrated every three years, and took place chiefly in Chios and Tenedos; from the raw flesh eaten at them Dionysos obtained his names of *ὀμωστής* and *ὀμάδιος*. Towards the end of the third century before Christ, these rites had invaded Italy; in B.C. 186, a young Roman having been cautioned not to attend them, by a freed slave who had been initiated into the mysteries, and who knew that it was the intention of the priests to sacrifice him, communicated with the magistrates, and the horrors of the Bacchanalian rites were exposed. Then the senate issued its famous edict, *De Bacchanalibus*, which banished the mysteries from Rome and Italy. "The Romans cannot be sufficiently thankful," wrote Pliny, "that they put away these monstrosities, in which it was regarded as an act of the highest religion to kill a man, and as a most salutary act to eat him."¹

This eating of human flesh was commuted afterwards to the devouring of the raw flesh of a ram or ox, and Arnobius describes the Bacchanalians of his day, who thought they received the fulness of God's majesty when they tore and ate struggling rams, with mouths that dripped with blood.² Firmicius Maternus alludes to the same custom as prevailing in Crete, where, he says, in commemoration of the boy Dionysos, they tear in pieces with their teeth, once in three years, a living ox.³

But this communion united to a commemorative sacrifice was not peculiar to the Bacchic rites, but prevailed in all, or nearly all, the sacrificial ritual of the Greeks. Con-

¹ Plin. Hist. Nat. xxx. 1.

² Arnob. adv. Gentes, v. 19.

³ De Error. Prof. c. 2. See also Clemens Alex. Cohort. adv. Gentes, and Tertull. Apolog. 8.

sequently, S. Paul exhorted his converts to avoid these communions of the heathen. "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils; ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils."¹ "If any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols?"²

What the Egyptians related of the death of Osiris, who was slain by his brother Typhon and his accomplices, and whose body was cut up into twenty-six pieces, which were cast into the Nile, and all but one recovered by Isis, resembles the Orphic myth of Zagreus.

Among the ancient Hindús, Soma was a chief deity; he is called the giver of life and of health, the protector, he who is the guide to immortality. He became incarnate among men, was taken by them and slain, and brayed in a mortar. But he rose in flame to heaven, to be the benefactor of the world and the mediator between God and man. Through communion with him in his sacrifice man has an assurance of immortality, for by that sacrament he obtains union with his divinity. "O Soma!" the Hindu is taught to pray by the Veda, "thou art the strength of our heroes and the death of our enemies . . . invincible in war, fulfil our vows in battle . . . fight for us! none can resist thee; give us superiority!" "O, Soma immortal, may we drink of thee and be immortal like thee!"³

The whole mythologic legend of the Soma is nothing but the allegorical history of the plant *Sarcostemma vimi-*

¹ 1 Cor. x. 21, 28.

² 1 Cor. viii. 10.

³ Veda, in Langlois, Mem. sur la Divinité Soma.

nalis, which is regarded with passionate love, because of the intoxicating liquor which is derived from its juice. It is regarded as a god-send; the way in which it is prepared is by crushing it in a mortar; the juice is then thrown on the sacrificial flame, and so rises to heaven.

A similar worship existed among the Iranians, but they did not ferment the Homa, as they called it, and though to it they attributed divinity, they did not make it a Supreme god, as did the Hindús. With both, the partaking of the juice was regarded as a sacramental act, by virtue of which the receiver was embued with a portion of the divine nature.

Cannibalism is nearly always a religious act; among the rudest peoples it is practised on the supposition that with the flesh the eater assimilates the spirit of the victim, and thus there ensues great competition over a courageous adversary, each warrior being ambitious of eating him that he may obtain his valour. When the heroic Jesuit, Brébeuf, was tortured by the Iroquois, the savages were so astonished at his endurance that they "laid open his breast, and came in a crowd to drink the blood of so valiant an enemy, thinking to imbibe with it some portion of his courage. A chief then tore out his heart and devoured it."¹ Like torture, anthropophagism was among the Indians partly an act of vengeance, and partly a religious act. "If the victim had shown courage, the heart was first roasted, cut into small pieces, and given to the young men and boys, who devoured it to increase their own courage. The body was then divided, thrown into kettles, and eaten by the assembly, the head being the

¹ Parkman : Jesuits in Canada, p. 289.

portion of the chief.”¹ The Miamis have among them a clan of man-eaters whose hereditary duty and privilege it is to devour the bodies of prisoners burned to death. The act has a religious character, and is attended with ceremonial observances. It is much the same among the New Zealanders. “Of the slain,” says a Maori chief, “some are cooked and eaten. The first man killed is made sacred to the Atua, in order to propitiate him. He is thus disposed of. His heart is cut out and stuck on the top of a post. His ear and some of the hair of his head are preserved to be used at the ceremony called Feed-wind. The ear is for the female Ariki of the tribe to eat in the ceremony called Ruahine, by which the war party are made free. The heart is for the male Ariki to eat at the ceremony called Tautane. The second person slain is also sacred, the priest alone being permitted to eat his flesh.”²

The notion that the consumption of the heart or blood of a brave man communicates valour to the consumer is simple and natural enough. The idea of sacred communion is more complex. The victim being made over to the god, becomes part, so to speak, of the god, and by the communicant feeding on the victim he becomes a partaker thereby of that which not only belongs to God, but is assimilated into God. The victim is, what Hegel would call, the synthetic moment between the mutual contradictories God and man.

The act of sacrifice is always regarded as uniting most intimately the victim with the god. Thus, Tohil, the Moloch of the Quiches, we have seen in the preceding

¹ Parkman : *Jesuits in Canada*, p. xxxix.

² Shorthand : *Traditions of New Zealand*, p. 247 ; 1856.

chapter demanding the union of the native tribes with him. This they accept, and discover when too late that this union signifies the sacrifice of themselves. The partaking of the sacrifice is regarded as the union of the votary with the god, by union with the victim, and it is on this theory that a sacramental eating almost invariably forms the complement of every sacrificial act.

CHAPTER XX

THE HUMAN IDEALS

The necessity of an Ideal—When God is the essence of abstraction, hero-worship steps in—Types of heroes worshipped—The theory of hero-worship—The ideal of beauty—of dignity—The female ideal—Mary, the Christian female ideal.

HABITS make the man, and habits obtain through imitation. If man has a good pattern before him, he will copy that; if provided with a bad one, he will grow up with habits that are bad. An ideal is necessary to him as a progressive animal. If he is to advance, he must see something ahead of him to attract him forward. He must believe that imperfection is not essential, and that perfection is obtainable. To form an ideal is to refuse acquiescence in facts, to feel conviction that circumstances are made by man, and not man by circumstances. The tendency of the mind to exaggerate is a manifestation of the faculty of idealization. A brute never supposes anything to be better or worse than it really is. But not so man: he pitches his conception of good and bad above experience; he is disposed to enhance the virtues or vices of every person with whom he is acquainted, so that it is always a disappointment and a surprise to him when he finds that his estimate has exceeded what exists.

In the first Theopœic age God was every quality idealized; but as the only qualities then appreciated were envy,

rage, and force, God was regarded as the most envious, furious, and powerful existence conceivable. When, however, the notion of God was disengaged from human passions, and became more and more absolute, it lost its qualification as the ideal of humanity, and remained the ideal of abstract qualities; then arose hero-worship, a necessary reaction, for God having ceased to be human, deified mortals were elevated to the position of exemplars, vacated by God.

The ideal is formed by purifying human nature, by abstracting from it all that is odious and imperfect, and by sublimating all that is good. This abstraction is not arbitrary, but is determined by the point of view at which men stand: such as is their mode of living, such is their mode of thought, and such also is their mode of abstraction. This abstraction is at once affirmative and negative. What man esteems, that is to him God. The Mexican deified salt, and the Finn adored the wash-tub. What is imperfect is rejected, what is essential is distinguished from what is accidental, what is good from what is bad. When the Deity becomes the essence of intellectual qualities of order, volition, and wisdom, he ceases to be idealized human nature, and men seek in a middle region between earth and heaven an ideal of love, courage, beauty, and justice. The conception of an absolute intelligence is too frigid, too remote from man, for him to be able to take it to heart. He demands a sensible object about which his imagination may play, and this he finds either in the deification of man, or in the incarnation of God.

Almost all religions present us with examples of hero-worship, for this reason, that human types of excellence are necessary for the education of man. Where no hero-worship exists, there we find no advance in civilization; for those few races who are without human ideals are thereby

destitute of incentives to perfection. The lowest type of deified hero is the man of vast bodily strength. Every nation has its ideal of brute force, who strangles serpents, tears lions, and kills hosts of enemies. The type is higher when the hero exercises his great strength in freeing his native land from robbers, dragons, and other noxious beasts. Such are Perseus, Mithras, Feridun, Sigfrid, Herakles, S. George. Another ideal is the hero who makes great discoveries which benefits the race, a Prometheus who teaches men how to kindle fire, a Cadmon who introduces letters, a Quetzalcoatl, an Oannes, a Hu Cadarn, who teach men how to plough and sow corn, a Dædalus or a Votan who invents sails, a Völundr who discovers the art of forging iron. A higher type, again, is the great and wise reformer and law-giver inspired of God—a Buddha, a Moses, a Zarathustra, a Mohammed.

A very favourite type of hero is the great, wealthy, and powerful king under whose sway the land had rest, or achieved conquests, when gold was as silver, and silver as brass, and brass as iron. And though all this splendour may have been produced by severe taxation, the memory of after ages recalls the magnificence, but forgets the misery. Solomon's reign was one of lavish pomp, and the traditions of the Jews to this day circle around him as the central figure in a golden age, yet the exactions of Solomon brought about a rupture between the tribes constituting his kingdom.

Often the golden age of a nation is not only in the past, but also looms in the future, and the prince who reigned in the first age is supposed to be about to reappear in the second.

A nation that suffers clings to the traditions of the past, and hopes for the future. The present is to it one of bitter

sorrow and degradation; but it had a glorious past—at least it chooses to think so, and before it is a glorious future, which it is determined to look forward to. The Esthonian from the time of the German invasion lived a life of bondage under a foreign yoke, and the iron of his slavery entered into his soul. He sang:—

“ In the bosom of the forest
Where the bushes fling their shadows,
Where the alder boughs are dripping,
Where the birches sadly waver,
There of mossy cairns are seven,
Not adorned by loving fingers,
Nor by watchful eyes attended.
One contains our tears of anguish,
One contains our chains of bondage,
One is o’er our smitten heroes,
In the fourth wails gnawing famine.
In the fifth humiliations,
In the sixth the plague is lurking,
In the seventh utter ruin.”¹

And he told how the ancient hero Kalewipoeg sits in the realms of shadows with his fist in the rock waiting till his country is in its extremity of distress, when he will draw his hand out of the living stone, and return to earth to avenge the injuries of the Esths, and elevate the poor crushed people into a mighty power.

The suffering Kelt has his Brian Boromhe, or Arthur, who will come again, the first to inaugurate a Fenian millennium, the second to regenerate Wales. Olger Dansk, iron mace in hand, waits till the time arrives when he is to start from sleep to the assistance of the Dane against the hated Prussian. The Messiah is to come, and restore the kingdom to the Jew. Charlemagne was the Messiah of

¹ Kalewipoeg ; Dorpat, 1857.

Mediæval Teutondom. He it was who founded the great German empire, and shed over it the blaze of Christian truth, and now he sleeps in the Kyffhauserberg, seated at a stone table, waiting till German heresy has reached its climax and Germany is wasted through internal conflicts, to rush to earth once more, and revive the great empire and restore the Catholic faith. The expectation of a Messiah, and of a golden age, is the child of hope, and hope is the child of oppression. The most down-trodden peoples are those which believe most intensely in a future age of triumph. What a Saviour is to a weary soul, and Heaven is to a forlorn spirit, that a Messiah and a future golden age are to an oppressed and suffering people.

Greece and Rome had neither. Why? Because Greece and Rome were not under bondage. If they fabled of a golden age, that age was past; but there was none in the future. Ovid sings of the change of ages from gold to silver, and from silver to brass, and from brass to iron; but he holds out no hope of future renovation. Horace, with cruel acrimony, generalizes the same idea, and makes of degeneration a law: "The age of our fathers, worse than that of our grandfathers, gave birth to us, and we, still further depraved, shall give birth to a race inferior to our own." Tibullus joins his voice to the concert of malediction against the present age, and regrets the happy age when barbarism reigned supreme. The most eminent philosophers bowed to the traditions of the past. This discouraging doctrine envelops the whole of classic paganism; but hope was not dead. From the anguish of a ruined East burst a cry at once of hope and of faith, of faith in the future and of hope in a deliverer. That faith and hope took shape in the expectation of a Messiah.

Hero-worship is a practical recognition of a sense of

justice, an acknowledgment of gratitude due to those who, in foregoing ages, have conferred material benefits on mankind. It is an assertion that when posterity profits by the labours and self-sacrifice of its predecessors, it owes to them a debt of gratitude in return, and that, just as these benefactors returned practical good, so must posterity pay the debt by practical exhibition of gratitude. A religion without hero-worship is a religion which does not teach gratitude, and which is therefore wanting in one great moral requisite. It is not difficult to see that hero-worship is open to some abuses. The deification of the Roman emperors was a form of abject adulation, rather than a religious act; it took place when disbelief in the religion of the nation most prevailed, and precisely because of that disbelief men did not scruple to attribute to monsters of crime the title of divine, which had lost all real significance. This had found its counterpart in later days, when princes, whose virtues were of a negative order, and whose characters were redeemed from commonplace by the accidents of their position, have received apotheosis.

Hero-worship provides men with models of excellence, with types of generosity, courage, justice, self-sacrifice, and patriotism; and stimulates them to imitation, by reminding them that posterity is not forgetful of its benefactors, of those who, in preceding ages, have shown themselves the champions of all that is noble, and pure, and just.

The absence of hero-worship throws man in upon himself, and bids him live and die with no aim beyond his own day, no interest beyond his own circle, no desire beyond present enjoyment.

The generous impulse of the human heart has converted Buddhism into a religious worship of the hero, and in so doing it violates the fundamental principles of its founder.

Buddha, who abolished worship and sacrifice, is now the object of adoration, with hymn, and incense, and the oblation of fragrant flowers.

The hackneyed quotation, "*Naturam expelles furcâ, tamen usque recurret,*" is especially true of the highest and most generous instincts of human nature. The doctrine of the correlation of forces in the physical world is represented by the doctrine of the correlation of obligations in the social world. Solidarity, commerce, family life, are built upon the recognition of the binding nature of mutual obligations, on the recognition of the necessity of repaying what has been received. Parents bring up their children at great cost of time and comfort to themselves, and expect as a right, that, when they are infirm and old, their children will cherish them. If you employ a man to till your field, you give him an equivalent for his labour. If you profit by the example or by the discoveries of great men of past ages, to those men you are bound, on the same principle, to give an equivalent.

The other expedient for possessing a human ideal, is an incarnation of the Deity. This was practically, though not theoretically, adopted by the Greek, who saw in his deities the model of human beauty, the blossom (*ἄνθος*) of man (*ἄνθρωπος*). The Jews sought in God the ideal of truth, the Greek the ideal of physical perfection. With the Hellenes art and religion, therefore, went hand in hand. It is with amazement that we read in Pausanias' account of Greece of the innumerable statues of the gods which were all works of high art. Not merely the city squares, but the villages and the roads, were crowded with statues great and small, which were regarded as of inestimable value, both on account of their sanctity and of their æsthetic beauty. The

votive statues in the Acropolis alone supplied Polemon with material for four books. The treasury at Delphi overflowed with plastic art treasures.¹ Countless were the statues of conquerors at Olympia, and at other places of games. Rhodes in the days of Pliny possessed three thousand sculptured figures, of which a hundred were of colossal size.² The temple of Here at Samos is described by Strabo as a museum of art.³ Corinth, Sicyon, Mantinea, Megara, Ephesus, Syracuse, &c. also possessed numbers of exquisite statues; even among the rude Ætolians of Thermos at the Roman invasion were found two thousand.⁴ Æmilius Paulus brought out of Macedon two hundred waggons loaded with these works of art.⁵ Greece was thenceforth a mine of art, to which plunderers returned without exhausting it of its treasures.⁶

The ideal of the Assyrian was not beauty of form but dignity of carriage, and in the sculpture of that great race there is apparent a strain towards what is majestic; the characteristics of power are emphasized, the muscles stand out hard and knotted, indicative of strength, and the flowing outline disappears. The stately solemnity of the winged bulls is not to be surpassed; and the calm power of the figure strangling a lion discovered by Botta,⁷ renders it the noblest representation of the idea of tranquil might produced by art.

The ideal of the Hindú has ever been the terrible, the unnatural, the monstrous; and consequently Indian art has been diverted from nature, and the taste for what is grotesque and hideous has been cultivated at the expense of the taste for the beautiful and the dignified.

¹ Pausanias, x. 9.

² Plin. xxxiii. 4; xxxiv. 7.

³ Strabo, xiv. 637.

⁴ Livy, xxxix. 5.

⁵ Ibid. xlv. 39.

⁶ Wacksmuth: Hellen. Alterthumskunde, ii. 656.

⁷ Botta, plate 41

Alongside of the ideal of male perfection has ever hung in luminous beauty the ideal of female perfection, of woman as she ought to be, and as men persisted in believing that she might be,—the model of chastity, of maternity, and of conjugal fidelity. The veneration for chastity is one of the most remarkable characteristics of man; virginity is always regarded with respect; the presence of marriage rites is an admission of this regard. The brute-beast has no idea of modesty and of chastity, but the admiration which chastity receives, and the reverent love which modesty calls up, are evidences that men see in chastity and modesty an ideal beauty different in kind from that belonging to married life. So is there a special beauty and charm in the wife, captivating when it rises to the type of Alcestis, but venerated specially by the Scandinavian races. Only second to the loveliness of virginity is the loveliness of motherhood, recognised by every race, for what race is without its maternal deities? The earth, that nourishes and cherishes the families of living beings, is the great typical mother, and received the worship of the heathen world.

Christianity fused the three ideals into one, and upraised Mary as the ideal of chastity, the ideal of married life, and the ideal of motherly love. Of the influence of this great model let Mr Lecky speak: "The world is governed by its ideals, and seldom or never has there been one which has exercised a more profound, and on the whole a more salutary influence, than the mediæval conception of the Virgin. For the first time woman was elevated to her rightful position, and the sanctity of weakness was recognised as well as the sanctity of sorrow. No longer the slave or toy of man, no longer associated only with ideas of degradation and of sensuality, woman rose, in the person of the Virgin Mother, into a new sphere, and became the object of a

reverential homage of which antiquity had had a conception. Love was idealized. The moral charm and beauty of female excellence was for the first time felt. A new type of character was called into being: a new kind of admiration was fostered. Into a harsh and ignorant and benighted age this ideal type infused a conception of gentleness and of purity unknown to the proudest civilizations of the past. In the pages of living tenderness which many a monkish writer has left in honour of his celestial patron; in the millions who, in many lands and in many ages, have sought with no barren desire to mould their characters into her image; in those holy maidens who, for the love of Mary, have separated themselves from all the glories and pleasures of the world, to seek in fastings and vigils and humble charity to render themselves worthy of her benediction; in the new sense of honour; in the chivalrous respect, in the softening of manners, in the refinement of tastes displayed in all the walks of society; in these and in many other ways we detect its influence. All that was best in Europe clustered round it, and it is the origin of many of the purest elements of our civilization."¹

Of the God-man the Christian ideal of perfection, I shall have to speak of in another volume: here I will only say that if man requires a great Exemplar, so does woman require one too. A religious system which would provide man with a model, and leave woman destitute of one, is imperfect, and inadequate to supply the wants of human nature.

Modern Roman Mariolatry is a religious development in obedience to law. Primitive Christianity was distinctly an intellectual movement, and was therefore a religion for thinking men. Mediæval Christianity refused scope to reason in religion; it therefore shifted the basis of the

¹ Lecky: *Rise and Influence of Rationalism*, i. 234.

Catholic system to sentiment. Man, as a rational rather than a sentimental being, has therefore steadily disengaged himself from Catholicism: woman, the creature of feeling, clings to it; and as Catholicism becomes more and more a religion of females, the female ideal necessarily assumes advancing prominence. The relative positions occupied by the male and female ideals in a religious system is an index of the hold that system has upon the thinking or the feeling portions of the community. When there is no female ideal, as in Mohammedanism, woman is of no account. Where, as in modern Romanism, that ideal is supreme, men are conspicuously absent from the churches.

Each ideal is necessary, and each has its place. To woman, the male type of perfection is requisite to give her nerve and judgment, and to man the ideal of female excellence is necessary to give refinement and delicacy.

The softest spot in man's heart is the love of his mother; religion claims that spot on which to build a sanctuary, and if man may not look up to, and address a mother in heaven, his filial love will maternalize and deify Nature.





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